

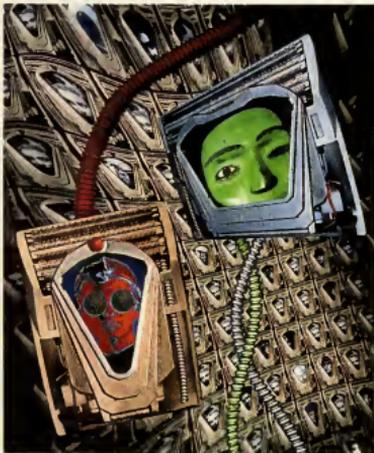
## Here's your chance to interact with the Sci-Fi Channel.

BY MAX LANSING

**N**OW FANS EVERYWHERE CAN ACCESS the Sci-Fi Channel with the help of their personal computers. ■ The Sci-Fi Channel is currently reaching out to more than three million science fiction fans coast to coast with interactive options on the popular online services Prodigy, CompuServe, and America Online. ■ Members of the over 1.5 million households with Prodigy can log on to the Sci-Fi Channel area to get

detailed program listings and information. They may also post messages on the Sci-Fi Channel bulletin board, read comments by other users, and get responses from the Sci-Fi Channel. To find the Sci-Fi Channel on Prodigy, subscribers should: Go to "TV Guide" in the "Entertain-

ment" area, click on "Networks," then click "Sci-Fi Channel." Or: Go to "Jump" and type in "Sci-Fi Channel."



When not staring at their TV screens, Sci-Fi Channel fans now have a good reason to stare at their computer screens as the Channel goes online.

ment" area, click on "Networks," then click "Sci-Fi Channel." Or: Go to "Jump" and type in "Sci-Fi Channel."

Sci-Fi Channel viewers can also get program and schedule information, post public notes on CompuServe, the rapidly growing online service which currently reaches approximately 1.2 million households. To access the Channel via CompuServe, users should:

1. Go to the "SciFi" forum under "Hobbies and Interests," then go to the "SciFi TV" section.
2. Go to the "SciFi TV" library for schedule information or to post messages in the forum.

Note: You can contact the Sci-Fi Channel at E-mail address 72360.2415. The screen name is "Max Lansing."

The Sci-Fi Channel also has its very own forum on America Online, a growing new service which already has over 600,000 subscribers. America Online users can

choose from 12 sections with over 50 options. Users get immediate access to episode titles, movie synopses, schedules and times, and more. They can also enter one of four specialized areas to (inter)actively participate in the Sci-Fi Channel:

**The Fan Dome:** Enter real-time chat rooms; communicate with other Sci-Fi Channel fans; interview SF celebrities during scheduled specials; ask Sci-Fi Channel reps questions about the network; and receive information on upcoming sci-fi conventions throughout the country.

**Lab:** Use message boards and take part in surveys to contribute ideas and feedback to the Sci-Fi Channel.

**FTL Newsfeed:** Learn the history of FTL Newsfeed, the Sci-Fi Channel's innovative news feature which reports the current events of the year 2144. Keep up to date on the latest 22nd Century news!

**Graphic Inter-Mission:** Download images of characters from both original and acquired Sci-Fi Channel series and movies. In the future, users will also be able to download video segments from Sci-Fi Channel programming.

Additionally, in the near future, users will have the opportunity to participate in contests and order Sci-Fi Channel merchandise on America Online. To access the Sci-Fi Channel via America Online, subscribers simply: Go to "Keyword" and type in "Sci-Fi Channel." Or: Go to the "Television" area within the "Entertainment" forum and click on "Sci-Fi Channel." Or: Go to "Lifestyle & Interests," then click on "Sci-Fi Channel."

Note: The E-mail address and screen name of the SFC representative is "Max SFC."

America Online, Prodigy, and CompuServe can all be accessed from a broad range of personal computers using Windows, DOS, or Macintosh software, as well as from other types of personal electronic devices. They're all part of the Sci-Fi Channel's effort to make our viewers active participants in our exploration of the cutting edge of entertainment.

### LOOK OUT! A "Friday the 13th" Marathon is heading your way!

Friday, May 13th, at 6 p.m. EST, the Sci-Fi Channel will begin airing nine back-to-back episodes of *Friday the 13th: The Series*, in honor of the unluckiest day of the year.

Based on the popular *Friday the 13th* movies, the hour-long episodes of the series follow the continuing endeavor-

Continued on page 64

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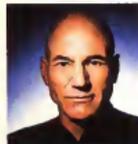
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## In the world of computer games the future is now.

BY ROBERT HOUSTON MARTIN

**W**HEN VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE PREDICTED that in our lifetimes, we'll see "fundamental changes... in the way we work, learn, shop, communicate, entertainment ourselves, and get health care and public services," he wasn't making some windy political promise. He was simply describing the inevitable. ■ And what will bring

about these changes? The expanding new field of convergence technology—which as he says, "is merging the functions of television sets, telephones, and computers."

At least one of Al's predictions has already come to pass; he said that the growth of the "national information

readers of this magazine), the prospect is an exciting one. Less exciting is the fact that the first uses of this technology will be for home shopping and "video-on-demand," that is, movies that you could just as easily tape from Cinemax. In fact, the "information superhighway" may start out looking like a super-hype-way. But as the network goes national, and eventually global, we will be entering a different world.

The Communications Reform Act, now before Congress, mandates that all local carriers on the new digital network will seamlessly interconnect with other carriers, following standards established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). One result of this legislation is that successful programming developed by each of the regional services should eventually be available nationally; that's how the much-heralded promise of "500 channels" will be filled. (What's more, the prediction of 500 channels is already dated. Zenith Electronics has announced plans to go into production with a set-top box that will carry a maximum of 1,000 channels. By the end of this century, the title of this column will probably not be such a stretch.)

How soon will all of this come to pass? Probably sooner than you think. For instance:

In Birmingham, Michigan, 40 cable-wired homes have been provided with Ameritech's Custom Connect TV service. The two-way system allows viewers to search listings of over 2,000 businesses. Commands from the remote control will list businesses by products and services or by name, or allow the viewer simply to browse; another click of the remote brings up more information, or a full-blown ad, for a selected business; and another will order merchandise or establish a voice-phone connection with the business itself.

The trial is based on Ameritech's similar telephone-based service, Custom Connect, which is available in several of the Midwestern areas where Ameritech provides local phone service. The company is committed to spending \$29 billion over the next 15 years to establish a digital video network, promising a wide range of services in addition to couch-potato shopping.

Pacific Bell has committed \$16 billion to building a digital video network connecting 5 million homes in northern California. The phone company has expressed a disinterest in providing programming (in which case they'd lease access to their network to independent program-

infrastructure" would create jobs, and it has created mine. The charter of *Infinite Channels* calls for me to watchdog the wired world and report on the shape of the future networks as they snake their way to your door. And while we're waiting for the new-tech explosion to reach our doors, I'll examine some of the products and services already available that carry that flavor of "future entertainment."

At this writing, several regional phone companies have already announced the commitment of over \$20 billion in capital investment to building broadband digital video networks, with billions more committed in buying up cable systems and programming sources. The first trials of new-tech communications are in place right now; by the end of this year, the first two-way television networks will be in place, delivered by wire, fiber optics, or 18-inch satellite mini-dish; and they'll be available to millions of Americans.

For technophiles like myself (and like, I trust, many



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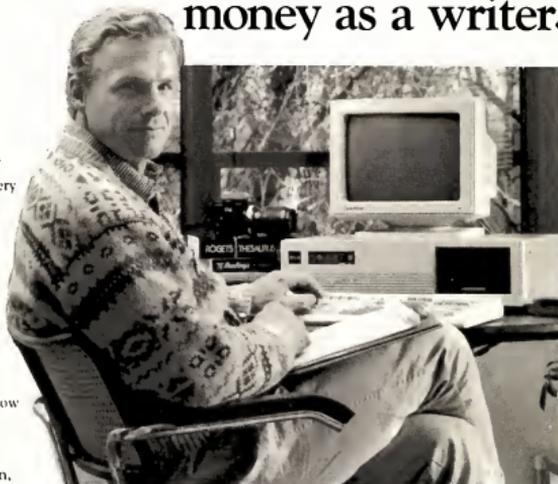
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*Quote from Leonard Malin's 1993 "Movie and Video Guide" (Signet Reference)*

mers), though rumors are currently flying about an alliance—and possibly a merger—with Disney.

New York State officials are currently rewriting the regulations that govern the operation of Nynex, that state's regional phone company, in order to speed the development of a "network of networks" that will link phone, cable, and information services. The effort is primarily motivated to serve New York City's information-dependent financial industries, with consumer benefits a likely "side effect." Nynex is currently on the lookout for a partner to help with the estimated \$25 billion cost of the new media network.

In New Jersey, Bell Atlantic is conducting a 300-home test of telephones with voice-recognition abilities (i.e., say "phone home," and the number you have programmed with that keyword will be dialed). If the trial is successful, voice recognition will become a part of their "Stargazer" digital video network, now being tested in 2,000 homes in Alexandria, Virginia, offering movies-on-demand and home shopping services.

Upon the completion of the test, the phone company expects to extend the service to 250,000 subscribers by the end of 1994, and to 1.25 million subscribers in the following year. By 2001, Bell Atlantic projects 8.75 million subscribers.

US West was the first local phone outfit to announce plans for a digital network back in February 1993. The Federal Communications Commission finally authorized their first test, in 2,500 Omaha homes, last December. The trial is expected to start by summer, expanding to 60,000 homes before the end of the year. US West has already applied with the FCC to expand the service to Denver, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Boise, and Portland, and expects to have a dozen more cities on its expansion list by 1995.

The "baby bells" are by no means the only players in this game; online computer services America Online, CompuServe, and Prodigy will all be experimenting with cable delivery in limited tests this year, and the long-distance phone companies, the conventional TV networks, and private satellite operators are all invested in the creation and delivery of "new media" programming.

### The CD-ROM War

There are currently about 6.5 million CD-ROM players in the hands of American consumers—4 million more than at the beginning of 1993—most of which are hooked up to computers. With CDs cheaper to produce than either ROM cartridges or floppy disks, growth of the CD format is expected to increase still more rapidly in 1994. But will the sales edge continue to belong to Sega?

Phillips CD-I (the I's for "interactive") was the first to jump into home CD-ROM players, but their decision to take a "family values" approach to marketing has made multimedia look as exciting as dried toast.

When I learned that Phillips was putting heavy promotion behind their forthcoming title *The Encyclopedia of Sex*, I thought perhaps they were changing strategies—until I learned that the video presence of the gnomish sexologist Dr. Ruth Westheimer is certain to sap the title of any possible sex appeal.

Of current machines, Phillips has the most software titles (over a hundred), but it has yet to come up with a "killer application" to convince the multitudes to take home their \$499 "Imagination Machine."

SegaCD, a \$230 add-on to the popular Sega Genesis, has reached about a million homes, despite the availability of just a handful of software titles (though many games have been announced for '94 release). SegaCD is limited by a single-speed CD-ROM (all of the competition, except for CD-I, boasts double-speed) and its 16-bit architecture supports only 64 on-screen colors, in a maximum resolution of 320 x 224.

Late '94 will bring a 32-bit Sega game machine, the *Saturn*, which the company has announced will combine a game machine, a home computer, and a cable-ready television set (no mention of CD, which may be an additional expense) for about \$450, with operating systems provided by the software giant Microsoft.

With the Saturn around, will new software continue to emerge for SegaCD? The general conduct of the electronics industry, where brand loyalty is fostered but consumer loyalty is unheard of, suggests that it won't. Nevertheless, Sega's confidence in its continued game machine supremacy is apparent; they've invested millions in a new high-tech multimedia production facility, and in the debut this summer of the Sega Channel gameplayers' network.

The Panasonic REAL 3DO Multiplayer is, at this writing, like a Cadillac without roads. It's a powerhouse, but after four months on the market, there are less than 25 compatible software products available. The *Crash 'n Burn* racing game that is bundled with the multiplayer, though the best play-at-home racing game there is, doesn't fulfill the promise of all the pre-release 3DO hype. So far, less than 50,000 3DO units are in American homes.

Software houses tend to be slow to develop products for a machine with a small user base. Still, the 3DO Corporation (from which Panasonic licenses the technology) insists that over 200 games are "in the pipeline," and later this year, AT&T and Sanyo will both be bringing out their own versions of the 3DO player. AT&T's model will be connectible for modem play; Sanyo's version will be lower-priced. That might pump some life into the format.

Atari's Jaguar game system has a CD add-on, but it's still another machine lacking in software, particularly in CD format. The machine itself is awesome; its 64-bit central processing unit (CPU) outperforms the 32-

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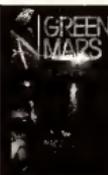
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bit CPU's (though much of the Jaguar's architecture maintains 32-bit limitations), at a competitive price: \$250 for the cartridge-based game machine (supporting game cartridges with up to six megabytes of data), and \$200 for the CD-ROM drive.

Given the competition, it's hard to figure how Commodore's Amiga CD<sup>32</sup> can fail. At \$399, its list price is lower than the Genesis/Sega/CD combination, and it will probably be as deeply discounted. The CD<sup>32</sup>'s power rivals that of the 3DO and the Jaguar; like these new-tech machines, the Amiga's graphics are handled by a separate graphics chipset for fast animation, high resolution, and a wide color palette. And Commodore promises to debut 85 software packages (including several popular cross-platform titles like *Jurassic Park* and *Sim City*) when the machine hits the stores this spring, with many more to follow.

As I said, it's hard to figure how the CD<sup>32</sup> can fail with this much power at this price. But Commodore's history in the home computer field is filled with technologically superior, inexpensive products that have failed to make more than a dent in the American market. The CD<sup>32</sup> is currently the top-selling game machine in Europe, where Amiga sales have traditionally been strong. By all that's fair, the CD<sup>32</sup> should repeat that success in the U.S.; but who said the world is fair? Certainly Sega's continuing success with the slowest and least powerful CD machine in the market provides mute testimony to the primacy of marketing muscle, and the quality of Sega's software library, in the video game wars.

### Myst's Virtual Worlds

Lurking in the message boards of America Online right after Christmas, I noticed an unusual amount of excitement in the Mac gamers' section for a new product that a lucky few had found in their stockings. Here was a game, said one poster, that "raised the bar for all CD-ROM products to come" — "an interactive novel that makes the others look like a comic book," said another. Mind you, these were gamers, not magazine reviewers bobbing for the advertising dollars of software producers.

Scattered among the mini-reviews and the pleas for puzzle help were messages from a fellow named Robyn, giving thanks for the praise, bestowing hints to the puzzled, sharing bad (really bad) poetry with the masses, and celebrating the rave reviews as they came in from various Macintosh magazines. This was Robyn Miller, the cocreator (with his brother Rand) of *Myst*, named by *MacUser* magazine the Best Entertainment CD of the Year. An E-mail message and a phone call to Seattle, where the Millers reside, gave me the chance to chat up the new media pioneer.

Six years ago Robyn was in college, an anthropology student with a fondness for the

Continued on page 71

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## But for a few visionaries, today's filmmakers prefer the tried and true.

BY PAUL M. SAMMON

LOOKING BACK AT 1994, FUTURE FILM HISTORIANS will probably dub this the Year of the Monster. ■ The *Big-Budget* Monster. ■ No wonder; some of our most durable and beloved cinematic horror icons (most of which have strong roots in science fiction) will be coming on strong this year, aided and abetted by some of Hollywood's biggest names, both behind and in front of the camera.

For openers, let's look at this short list:

Francis Ford Coppola producing Robert De Niro playing the Monster in *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, directed by Kenneth (*Dead Again*) Branagh.

Tom Cruise as the seductively undead Lestat in Anne

while *Vampire* had better have an excellent script to compensate for all the negative pre-publicity. (The project already has a competent director in the uneven Neil Jordan, he of the dreadful *High Spirits* and art house blockbuster *The Crying Game*.) As always, though, a film's overall quality remains a crapshoot until the final cut.

A number of other remakes of classic genre pictures also loom on the '94 horizon. One such project, which may be ready in time for Christmas, is a \$30-million remake of *Forbidden Planet*, now set to go before the cameras in London. Scripted by veteran screenwriter Sterling (*In the Heat of the Night*) Silliphant, *Planet* will be helmed by *Empire Strikes Back* director Irvin Kershner, who promises that "There will be a Robby the Robot—but he won't look the same."

From Universal Pictures come two remakes of wildly popular fantasy characters. First up is *The Flintstones*, a live-action version of the prehistoric cartoon series. John (*Roseanne*) Goodman portrays the lovable Fred Flintstone, Rick Moranis is his neighbor Barney Rubble, Elizabeth Perkins is Fred's wife Wilma, comedian Rosie O'Donnell plays Barney's wife, Betty, and—stop the presses—Elizabeth Taylor will play Fred's mother-in-law! *The Flintstones* will rumble out of the town of Bedrock and into your neighborhood this Memorial Day.

Also from Universal, and tentatively set for a July release, is the big-screen debut of another golden oldie, *The Shadow*, who began his legendary career in a slew of pulp magazines, then was portrayed on radio in the 1940s by the great Orson Welles. The story concerns playboy/mystic Lamont Cranston (Alec Baldwin), a brooding superhero whose celebrated "power to cloud men's minds" makes him virtually invisible to evildoers. In this summer's lavish production, Cranston teams up with the lovely, telepathic Margo Lane (Penelope Ann Miller, last seen dancing topless in Brian De Palma's *Carlito's Way*). Both are out to defeat the sinister Shivan Khan (John Lone, star of *Iceman* and *The Last Emperor*), a megalomaniacal villain who's a direct descendant of Genghis Khan. Look for impressive Art Deco sets and splashy direction from the hyperkinetic Russell Mulcahy, whose past credits include the *Highlander* films.

Other upcoming remakes include Universal's still-in-development *The Mummy*, to be directed by Joe (*Grem-lins*) Dante, plus a new version of *Planet of the Apes* from 20th Century Fox; professional agitator Oliver Stone



Jean-Claude Van Damme stars with Gloria Reuben as time enforcement cops who travel back in time to prevent a corrupt politician from altering history in this summer's futuristic thriller, *TimeCop*.

Rice's bestselling *Interview with the Vampire*—a casting choice so blatantly motivated by the Big Bucks Bottom Line that it even has *Vampire* author Anne Rice shaking her head. (One can certainly see Cruise as a vampirized victim—I suspect many people would love to see this cocky superstar's throat ripped out anyway—but Tom as a suave, sophisticated, rock-and-rolling French vampire? No way! Sting, maybe. Ms. Rice's own inspiration, Rutger Hauer? Sure. But Tom Cruise? C'mon!)

John Malkovich, so recently convincing as an ex-CIA hit man in the wildly popular Clint Eastwood actioner *In the Line of Fire*, will soon portray Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde in *Mary Reilly*, based on the much-acclaimed novel by Valerie Martin—an updated version of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic, seen from the point of view of Jekyll's housekeeper. Yet Malkovich isn't the top star here; that honor goes to Julia Roberts in the title role.

Anyway, the smart money for 1994 is on Coppola's *Frankenstein*. *Mary Reilly* remains an unknown quantity,



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Alec Baldwin stars as Lamont Cranston, aka The Shadow, scheduled for a July release.

(JFK. Born on the Fourth of July) is allegedly interested in exec-producing this one.

Things look more promising—though not in '94—for that beloved knuckleheaded '60s sci-fi show, *Lost in Space*. Paramount is currently negotiating for the rights to make a \$40-50 million theatrical version of the adventures of the Space Family Robinson, although sources close to the production say that the TV show's campy elements have been jettisoned in favor of "an action-adventure film with secondary comedy elements." Does that mean no Dr. Smith and the Robot? If so, and unless corporate honchos can come

up with something better, someone should alert Paramount to the dangers of tinkering with a tried-and-true formula.

Final news on the remake front concerns Paramount's durable *Star Trek* franchise. Despite numerous proclamations that the current, seventh season of Paramount Television's *Star Trek: The Next Generation* would be that series' last, the entire *Next Generation* cast recently signed two-year contract extensions. Looks like we'll be seeing more of Captain Picard after all. And there will indeed be a new *Trek* spinoff series, tentatively titled *Star Trek: Voyager*. It will be produced by *Next Generation* execs Rick Berman, Michael Piller, and Jeri Taylor, and should debut sometime in January 1995 as part of Paramount's proposed "fifth television network."

So many internal politics are swirling around the studio's next *Star Trek* movie that it's hard to keep pace with this ever-changing production. One day Leonard Nimoy is in, the next day he's out; one day William Shatner will star as Captain Kirk, the next he's been relegated to a cameo. Things are so fluid, in fact (at the time of this writing, anyway), that Paramount has clamped a lid on any press information regarding this upcoming project. Until these wrinkles are ironed out, perhaps *Star Trek* should change its spoken introduction to something like "Contract negotiations: the final frontier!"

What is known about the next *Trek*, however, is that it will mark the feature-film debut of director David Carson (who helmed the *Deep Space Nine* pilot), and that its story, by screenwriters Ron Moore and Brannon Braga, will reportedly unite cast members

## VIDEO PICKS

**V**ACATION TIME IS LOOMING, and with it the threat that you'll be expected to set foot outdoors. Here, selected from recent releases, are enough videos to help keep you inside!

**FIRE IN THE SKY** (Paramount): The intelligent man's *Communion*. Directed by Robert Lieberman, based on logger Travis Walton's claimed 1975 UFO abduction, it doesn't reveal its aliens till near the end, but they're worth the wait. Superb acting by D. B. Sweeney, Craig Sheffer (*A River Runs Through It*), and Robert Patrick (*Terminator 2*).

**DEAD ALIVE** (Vidmark Entertainment): A demented Monty Pythonesque blood-fest from New Zealand director Peter Jackson, about a plague of limb-ripping zombies. Wild slapstick horror in the Sam Raimi tradition, only far more disgusting. You'll either laugh...or cringe!

**SOLARIS** (Fox Lorber Home Video): The crew of a space station experiences mystical visions as their memories become real. Based on the 1961 Stanislaw Lem novel this murky 1972 Russian film

(subtitled) runs nearly three hours with lots of talk but little action or special effects; it feels like *Star Trek* on Valium.

**DEMOLITION MAN** (Warner Bros.): Latest and loudest example of the "shattered glass" school of filmmaking, it pits Sylvester Stallone against Wesley Snipes in a pacified, politically correct 2032, conceived by *Blade Runner* designer David Snyder and directed by Marco Brambilla.

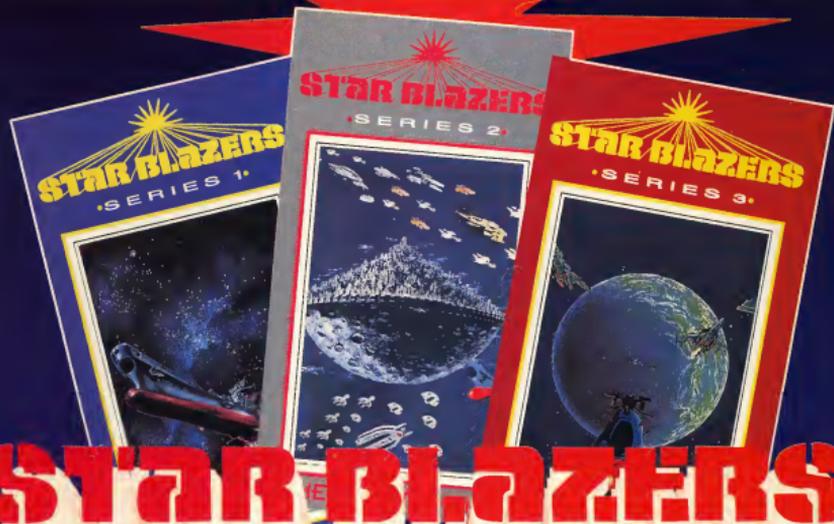
**THE MYSTERY OF KASPAR HAUSER** (New Yorker Video): Werner Herzog's touching 1975 film, subtitled from the German, stars real-life mental patient "Bruno S." as Hauser, who, raised in a dark stable and never taught to speak, was found abandoned in 19th century Nuremberg and adopted by a kindly aristocrat. Best scenes: the fragments of his dreams.

**THE HAUNTING** (MGM/UA): Though a tad dated and predictable, this 1963 film, starring Julie Harris and Claire Bloom, remains the most intelligent haunted-house movie ever made. Based on Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, and more than equal to it.

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John Goodman (right) and Rick Moranis  
as Fred Flinstone and Barney Rubble.

from the original *Trek* with the *Next Generation* crew in (what else?) a time-travel story. Optimists at the studio are talking about a possible Thanksgiving release.

Actually, it's a fairly common (if painful) occurrence for feature films to go through this sort of torturous birthing process. Take the example of Paul Verhoeven, famed director of *Robocop* and *Total Recall*. In the past year, Verhoeven has literally seen no less than three of his motion picture deals fall apart, including an Arnold Schwarzenegger historical epic on the Crusades, a dinosaur fantasy employing stop-motion animation under the supervision of Phil Tippett (who contributed effects to *Jurassic Park*, *Star Wars* and *Robocop*), and a much-rumored female pirate movie which was to have starred Michelle Pfeiffer. This last project was shut down just before the crew was to set sail for the Caribbean to begin production!

Not all major upcoming releases are remakes, thank goodness. Perhaps 1994's most exciting SF film news involves the return to the big screen of Stanley Kubrick, he of the groundbreaking *Dr. Strangelove*, 2001, and *A Clockwork Orange*. Warner Brothers will reportedly team up with Kubrick for a big-budget production entitled *A.I.* (for artificial intelligence), which takes place on "a post-Apocalyptic New Jersey shore at a time when robotic intelligence has dramatically advanced beyond our current technology." Kubrick is said to have been developing this project for years, but held back because he wasn't certain contemporary special-effects technology could deliver the elaborate fx *A.I.*'s script demanded. But all that reportedly changed after Kubrick caught a screening of *Jurassic Park*'s computer-generated dinosaurs.

The year's most ambitious sci-fi film is likely to be *StarGate*, an fx-driven production, scheduled for a November release. The budget has reportedly soared from \$30 million to as much as \$55 million—and its lead, Kurt Russell, is getting paid a career-high \$7 million to star. Directed by Roland Emmerich (whose previous film was the Jean-Claude Van Damme/Dolph Lundgren action pic *Universal Soldier*) and based on an original screenplay he wrote with Dean Devlin, the film spans time and interstellar space by combining archeology, astronomy, and

Egyptian myth. It reportedly begins with the discovery at Gaza of an ancient Egyptian artifact, "the StarGate," which transports a top-secret research team light-years across the galaxy, to an alien world ruled by a mysterious being named Ra, played by Jaye Davidson, an Oscar nominee for *The Crying Game*. James Spader, also in *Wolf* opposite Jack Nicholson, plays an Egyptologist.

Then there's *TimeCop*, a new Jean-Claude Van Damme project that sounds suspiciously like a bigger-budgeted version of the current Australian-based syndicated SF series *Time-trax*. Set in the year 2004, *TimeCop* topline Van Damme as a rootin' tootin' kickin' and shootin' lawman tracking bad guys who've escaped into the past in order to alter the future. Costars are Ron Silver and Mia Sara; Peter (2010) Hyams directs.

Here's good news for those in my generation who were first introduced to science fiction through the wonderful novels of Robert A. Heinlein, who died in 1988. Of all his books, perhaps the one that most cried out for filming was his classic 1951 paranoid thriller *The Puppet Masters*, a terrifying novel about sluglike things from Titan who, landing in a saucer in Iowa, proceed to fasten themselves to the backs of people's necks and control their minds. The book is at last being brought to the screen by Hollywood Pictures in a production directed by Stuart Oren (whose previous credits include the Joan Aiken children's classic *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*, filmed for British TV) and starring Donald Sutherland—who after 1976's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* should already be more than familiar with brain-washing aliens. The film, which began shooting in January, also stars Eric Thal as Sutherland's son. (The two of them recently appeared in *Six Degrees of Separation*.) Those who've read the script say that it follows Heinlein's novel very closely—although the townspeople forced to walk around naked in the novel (the better to be checked for alien infestation) will now get to wear underpants and tank tops.

More-good news, at least for those prepared to wait a while. After years of speculation and rumor, George Lucas is said to be firming plans to produce (and direct at least part of), another *Star Wars* trilogy—a prequel to the original three films, which, as aficionados will recall, were intended to be chapters four, five and six in the complete *Star Wars* cycle. Word is that having finally completed a story treatment, Lucas hopes to begin production on the first of the new films by early 1996 and to finish the third before the end of the century.

Finally, noted author/artist Gahan Wilson, whose delightfully bizarre *Playboy* cartoons warped the minds of an entire generation, has been tapped by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment to develop a full-length animated film dealing with vampires. Details are sketchy, but the flick is set to be

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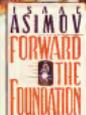
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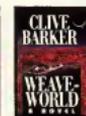
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# Rick Baker Meets the Wolfman



Jack Nicholson stars as publishing executive turned werewolf, Will Randall in Mike Nichols first horror film, *Wolf*. Michelle Pfeiffer (above with Nicholson) stars as Laura Alden, daughter of Randall's boss. Nicholson begins the transformation into werewolf (opposite) after a bite from a large, mysterious black wolf.

BY LISA LAKE

A wolf bites a man in the middle of the night on a dark country road. "The wolf passed along something to me," the man says later, "a scrap of its spirit, in my blood or something. I don't know what it is. I'm just... different. More alive."

The story is familiar, but the man is not Henry Hull, 1935's *Werewolf of London*, or Lon Chaney, Jr., Universal's *Wolf Man* of the '40s—it's Jack Nicholson, and the movie is director Mike Nichols's latest, *Wolf*.

Wolves and wolfmen have prowled through stories for as long as there have been stories to tell; and since the invention of cinema, every decade has had its werewolf movie. Due in theatres June 24th from Columbia Pictures, *Wolf* is the '90's answer to the call of the wild, a story that director Mike Nichols has described as "something that's happened, or could happen—something out of your own dreams." The film also stars Michelle Pfeiffer, James Spader, Christopher Plummer, and Kate Nelligan. Together with producer and partner Doug Wick, Nichols conceived of the project with Jack Nicholson in mind from the start; he had worked with the actor three times before, in *Carnal Knowledge*, *The Fortune and Heartburn*. "The difference between Jack and other actors—between Jack and other men—is that his 'underneath' is on the surface," says Nichols. "The darker parts of him are not hidden. He's halfway towards being a werewolf to begin with."

To complete the transformation, Nichols contacted legendary





makeup artist Rick Baker in the early stages of preproduction. Baker, who won the first competitive Academy Award for makeup for his groundbreaking work on *An American Werewolf in London*, was the natural choice, but he was involved in another project at the time and had to pass. "I only try to do one thing at a time so I can do it right," Baker says with a sigh. "I didn't want to do an injustice to the film I was working on, so I had to turn *Wolf* down. It was very hard."

The filmmakers hired someone else to do the work, but after 10 months of prep, they called Baker up again. "It was kind of a last-minute thing and they said, 'We're a week and a half away from shooting and we don't really have anything that's working yet, are you available? Are you still interested?'" Baker, who has long

shown a fondness for creatures caught between man and beast, jumped at the chance despite a limited makeup budget and only a few weeks to prepare. "Mike [Nichols] didn't really know what to do with the makeup and with the whole tone of the horror aspects of this film," he comments. "This is not the kind of movie he's used to making, and I think he said it's the most difficult movie he's ever made because he was exposed to things that he wasn't normally exposed to."

Says Nichols: "I just kept asking the question, how would this really happen? If this were going to happen, how would it happen physically? How would it affect people?"

In addition to his award for *An American Werewolf in London*, Baker won a second Academy Award in 1987 for *Harry and the Hendersons* and

a British Academy Award for *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes*. Donning an ape suit, he played an uncredited Kong in the 1976 Dino Di Laurentis remake of *King Kong* and received critical acclaim for his work on *Corillas in the Mist*, among other projects.

**B**aker wanted to take a different approach than he had a decade before with *American Werewolf*. "This movie is very different from *American Werewolf*, which was a real special-effects extravaganza," he explains. "This is more of a character piece about a man who changes from the inside out. The first thing I said to Mike Nichols was, 'This is not about a rubber wolf-nose and grease paint. You've got somebody like Jack Nicholson. It's



chologically that are glandular, and glands are a body system meant to overpower."

Baker concurs. "Jack gets a lot of benefits from being a wolfman," he says. "He gets his hair back, becomes more virile. A lot of what the makeup was to begin with was just to make Jack look better, and even as the wolfman, we tried to make it wolf-like, but also sensual and attractive."

**W**ill Randall's transformation is a gradual one, never betraying the man beneath the wolf. One of Nichols's aims was to create a sense that even in the earliest phases of his transformation, Will was shedding the worn skin of a browbeaten editor, henpecked husband, and victim of what Nichols has called the "late 20th century malaise." "There's a very strange thing that happened with the movie," he says. "Partly it's because Nicholson is a great actor and partly it's because Rick Baker is a great makeup man. Whatever, I think you just accept it. You say, 'Christ, he's changing.'"

"I went back more to the roots of the werewolf movies," says Baker. "This wolf is much more like a Jack Pierce makeup [1935's *Werewolf of London*, as well as 1941's more famous *The Wolf Man*] than an *American Werewolf*. It's a much more human wolfman than the full, four-legged werewolf creature."

Fortunately, Baker's conception of the wolf corresponded to ideas already formed by Nicholson. "I had an idea that I wanted to do for years," Nicholson says. "This was back before

the new special-effects revolution. I wanted to call it 'Wolfman, No Makeup.' I wanted to do these old-time tricks—you know, fall down behind the couch, come up with a beard, all that stuff."

Baker had heard that Nicholson was not very fond of sitting even for an ordinary makeup session, but before actually committing to the film, he wanted an opportunity to discuss his ideas with the actor. "It was kind of like 'No one sees the Great Oz—not nobody no-how.' So I told them that I wanted him to be happy with what I was planning, and if I was going to be making him up, I had to see his face. They said, 'It's pretty hard to get Jack,' and I said, 'Well, I'm not going to do it, then.'"

Subsequently, Baker was told he had an hour with Nicholson; he was to bring his life mask, prosthetics, and anything else he was planning to use. "I had to explain that I wasn't going there to make a bust of him and try to get answers out of him through a plaster head mold," Baker continues, laughing. "So I did some designs on the computer and told him where I was coming from with it, and he said [Baker does a Nicholson impression], 'Well, Ricky-boy, that's good 'cause this is the first werewolf movie without any makeup.'"

After their initial meeting, Baker had the opportunity to do only one test before principal photography was to start. Nicholson had agreed to just one day in which ward-robe, hair-

*Will Randall inspects the seemingly dead wolf (above) that struck his car. But the animal is only wounded, and is about to strike out at the human. Randall attacks a deer (opposite), actually a mechanical prop created by Amalgamated Dynamics.*

a crime to cover him up; that doesn't make sense.' I have covered people with big mechanical masks when it was the best way to do what the movie called for. With *Wolf*, on the other hand, it isn't; I really felt that only a minimal amount of makeup was needed to achieve the effect."

Ironically, as the character of Will Randall transforms into a wolf, he reclaims the manhood that he's let slip away through the latter part of his life. Nicholson, who committed himself to the project three hours after novelist Jim Harrison dropped off the third draft of the script, recently told *Vanity Fair*, "What this film says about male sexuality is that no matter how much men may want to suppress their sexuality, they will not be able to do it. See, a wolf don't have no psychology. We're always looking at things psy-



Nicholson "read a lot of books on wolves, and watched a lot of films on their behavior. I did not go out and live with wolves." Through most of the film, his makeup is kept to a minimum, relying instead on Nicholson's acting skill. FX artist Rick Baker needed only 40 minutes to apply Nicholson's makeup.

piece, and make-up tests all had to be crammed. "And this was on one of his golf days!" Baker laughs. "They spent three-quarters of the time trying on different sweaters and pants. Then they were slapping on these hairpieces, which were all quite outstanding, and then Jack was ready to go, and they said, 'OK, Rick, time for you to make him up now, and you better hurry up, 'cause he wants to go.' So the test had to be quick, and I wasn't too pleased with it, but Mike [Nichols] was quite happy, and so was Jack. He said something like, 'Ricky-boy, I think we're on the right track.'" Despite Nicholson's aversion to the

makeup chair, the actor and Baker found a way to coexist peacefully. "My part of Jack's makeup probably took me at the most 40 minutes," says the soft-spoken makeup artist, "but it usually took me three hours to get him in and out of the chair. It all depended on what kind of mood he was in on that day, and there were ups and downs. It was hard both ways, but he was good. We each understood what the other had to do."

Baker also worked with Tom Woodruff's and Alec Gillis's Amalgamated Dynamics, which had been contracted to do all special effects in the film. "In the 10 months before I came on, the effects were divided between the original makeup person and Tom and Alec, who did some of the wolf things. I had an idea at one point that, because the makeup is so subtle, what could be even more frightening would be to have Jack do something in a quick cut that was impossible for a human to do. So I said, 'Let me do a fake version of Jack in the makeup and have his mouth open twice as wide as he is physically capable of opening it.' And they said, 'Great, let's get Tom and Alec to do it.' Even though animatronics are part of what I do, it turned out that Tom and Alec had a contract to do all that stuff. So they did the dummy head and I gave them whatever I could of Jack,

and they did a really great job."

Part of Baker's longtime fascination with what he calls "werewolf things" came from his early days watching the old monster movies of the '30s and '40s. "I'm a real big fan of the old Universal horror films. That's the stuff that got me interested, and Jack Pierce is one of my idols. In fact, I have a picture of him in my office, making up Boris Karloff as the monster in *Frankenstein*. I go to visit his grave in Forest Lawn."

Born in 1950 in Binghamton, New York, Baker initially thought he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up. "But then at about 10 years old, I realized I really didn't want to be a doctor at all," he says. "I wanted to be Dr. Frankenstein. I wanted to have this mad laboratory with all these Tesla Coils and flasks and beakers. I wanted to make a monster. I wanted to create life. When you're trying to use servos and rubber and hair to make something that looks like a living, breathing creature, it gives you an amazing respect for life."

"I'll never understand how some people can take a life and not feel it. Animals kill for food; they don't walk down the street and shoot somebody for kicks. I think that's part of what *Wolf* is about, the need to retain your humanity but also fight to survive as the world grows more savage." □

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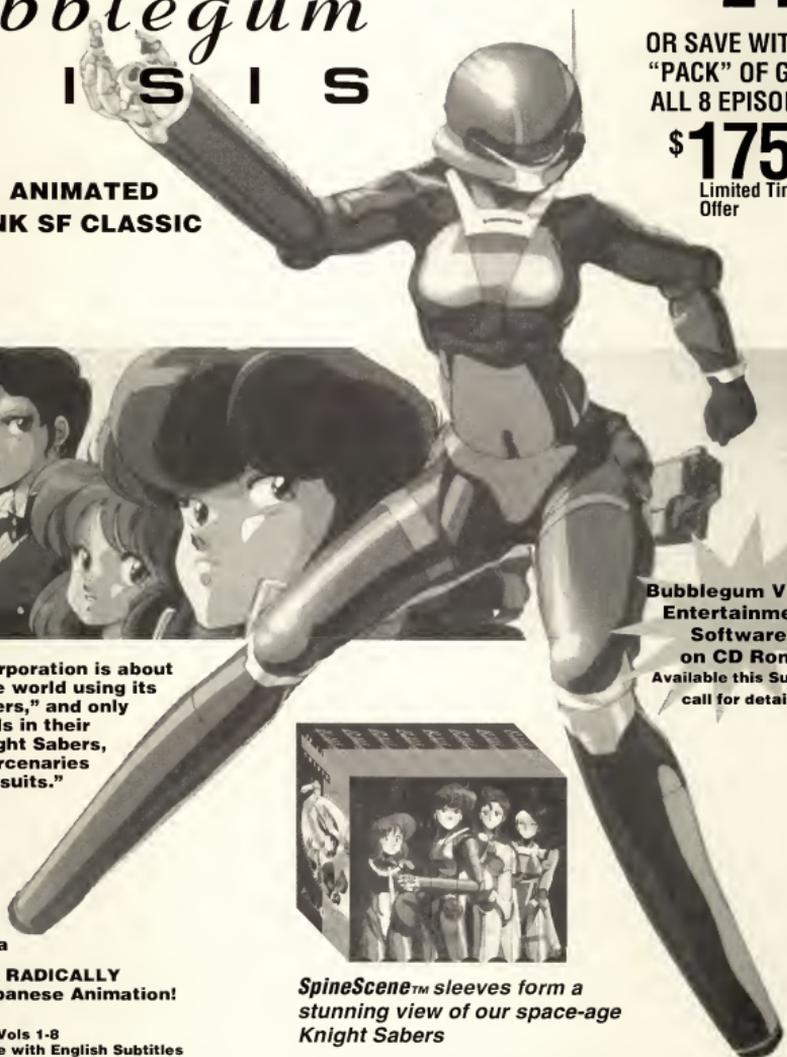
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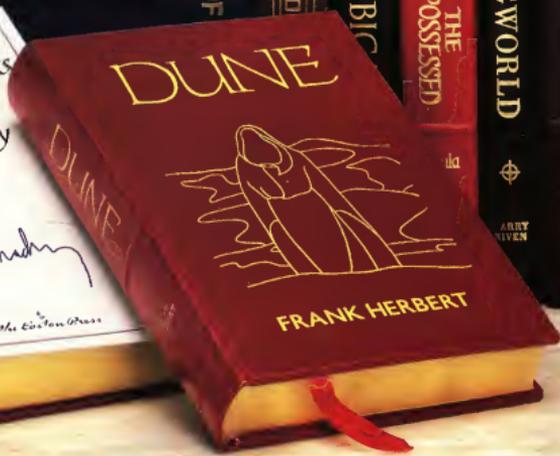
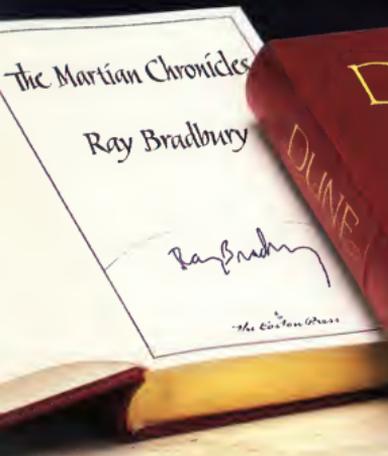
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Gateway, Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*, Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, and A.E. van Vogt, *Slan*. And, Isaac Asimov signed a number of copies of *The Foundation Trilogy* before his death in 1992 (due to their limited supply, you should act promptly to avoid disappointment). These extraordinary

*Uh oh, look out! The cute little kids with the pink hair and enormous eyes are coming! In fact, they've already taken over... and America is dancing to a Japanese 'toon.*

# Japanimation's RISING SUN

**By Lea Hernandez**

YOU MAY NOT KNOW IT, but you—yes, you—may be a secret fan of Japanese animation! Have you ever watched *Speed Racer*? Or *Kimba*? A Rankin-Bass holiday special? *Batman: The Animated Series*? A recent animated Disney film like *The Little Mermaid* or *The Rescuers Down Under*? Have you visited the newest specialty section in your neighborhood video store?

Unless you haven't been near a theater or television set in the last 30 years, chances are good you've seen Japanese animation or *anime* (rhymes with Lonnie May), Japanese-influenced animation, or, at the very least, animation produced in Japan. Many of the old Rankin-Bass Christmas specials bear a distinct Japanese stamp in the way the characters move and react. Dubbed *anime* has been on American television since the '60s, and some of these programs have even been bona fide hits. *Astro Boy* and *Kimba* still have cult followings. *Speed Racer* is the sort of ultra-hip 'toon that gets late-night showings on MTV. *Akira*, Katsuhiro Otomo's technical masterpiece, is an art-house favorite.

Subtitled and dubbed *anime* videos can be found in most video stores, as well as in comics stores. *Anime* in-jokes have even found their way into *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, courtesy of senior illustrator (and *anime* fan) Rick Sternbach. The most memorable of these were the mechanical creatures known as "unicomps." Referred to as "piggies" on the set, the unicomps were based on a little robot named "Namo" from the Japanese television series *Dirty Pair*.

Many people in their 30s fondly remember at least one Japanese animated show from their childhood, whether it was *Kimba*, *Eighth Man* (which was pulled because the hero smoked to replenish his powers), *Astro Boy*, or *Marine Boy*. If you're a little younger, you probably remember *Speed Racer* or *StarBlazers*.

For years, American shows were animated in Japan because it used to be cheaper. When animating there became prohibitively expensive, the shows were still directed in Japan, with production moving on to Korea and Thailand. For a time, these cartoons ruled Saturday-morning TV with shows such as the surprisingly witty *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Galaxy Rangers*, *Mighty Orbits*, *Spiral Zone*, *Silver Hawks* and a host of others. Later, even Warner's *Tiny Toons* and *Batman* and Disney's *Duck Tales* would be animated in Japan and other parts of Asia.

Outward bound: named for the Japanese battleship Yamato, an immense spaceship voyages across the cosmos in the popular TV series StarBlazers.





Wild nonstop action characterizes many Japanese cartoons, such as *Harmagedon* (above) and *Project A-ko* (right), in which a spat between two headstrong school-girls turns into a full-scale war utilizing armored robots and high-tech weapons.



In the early '80s, *StarBlazers* began running in syndication. The story of the spacefaring incarnation of the Japanese battleship *Yamato* and its crew voyaging through the cosmos on a quest for help for a dying Earth, it is remembered by its fans for the quality of the

series was popular), toys that were copies of the Japanese originals, and an unsuccessful feature film.

After *Robotech* played out the mine for television audiences of *anime*, Disney took up the slack as it animators used the best parts of the Japanese style and the best parts of director Hayao Miyazaki's films for such features as *The Great Mouse Detective* (its clock scene was an homage to a similar battle in *Castle of Cagliostro*); *The Rescuers Down Under* (flying scenes from *Nausicaa* and *Little Witch Kiki*); and *The Little Mermaid* (the character designers purposely went for a Japanese look in their heroine, Ariel). Disney's newest film, *The Lion King*, seems to have been inspired, at least in part, by Osamu Tezuka's *Kimba*. The animator of the flying carpet in *Aladdin*, Randy Cartwright, also worked on the U.S.-Japanese co-production of *Little Nemo*. Disney animators were rumored to have kept Hayao Miyazaki art books hidden in their desk drawers.

*Anime* has had a devoted following of fans in the U.S. for years. These fans are responsible for the near-ubiquitous *anime* rooms at American science fiction, comic, and media conventions. Fans populate the "information superhighway" from Internet to special interest groups on every online service. Other groups meet monthly for screenings.

It was the large fan following in this country that prompted a Japanese studio, Gainax, to sponsor the largest (but not the first) convention devoted to Japanese animation and comics, AnimeCon '92, in San Jose, California. Around the same time, other cons were springing up all over the country, including Project A-

## Anime ranges from anthologies like Robot Carnival to horror such as Vampire Hunter D.



writing and acting as well as for its complex story line and delineation of characters. Another show from Japan, *Battle of the Planets*, released at the same time, is disliked for all the same reasons *StarBlazers* was liked. Ironically, the series (*Gatchaman* in Japan) had a story-line and characters as dramatic as *StarBlazers*, but something was lost in the translation. *Gatchaman*, like a number of films and TV shows that would follow it, was heavily edited to remove hints of sexuality, violence, and, unfortunately, intelligence—dumbed down and mangled by frustrated artists and writers justifying their jobs so that the series could be sold to an audience of children.

In the mid-'80s *Robotech* was a syndicated hit, perhaps the biggest since *Kimba*. It had *StarBlazers'* action, romance and story line. A combination of three separate series with similar design styles, it spawned a line of comic books (not good ones, but they sold because



© 1994 Central Park Media

Kon in Texas and *anime* conventions at I-Con on the East Coast. More recently, AnimeCon has spun off into Anime America and Anime Expo, A-Kon is heading toward its fifth year, and KatsuCon is waiting in the wings.

Fans are also behind the latest cottage industry in video: importing *anime* from Japan for the sales and rental market. Roe Adams and Robert Woodhead started the South Carolina-based AnimEigo, which produces and distributes (among other things) subtitled versions of the cyberpunk-lite *Bubble Gum Crisis* and the Japanese TV hit *Urusei Yatsura*. Another group of fans started A.D. Visions, home of *Demon Hunter Yoko* and the made-for-video space opera *Sol Bianca*. In addition, Voyager Entertainment is marketing the complete *StarBlazers* trilogy.

Today *anime* is as close as a trip to the video store, or, in the case of companies such as Streamline (*Vampire Hunter D*) and US Manga Corps (*Dominion*), as close as cable TV. For a fan of *anime*, this is heaven: no more waiting weeks for tapes from friends in Japan or for expensive imported videos and LDs. *Anime* is just a video store or cable box away.

But what does this mean to folks who aren't fans? Why watch *anime*? The consensus seems to be because it's different. Both John O'Donnell of US Manga Corps and Scott Frazier of the Thailand-based animation company TAO cite the qualities of pacing, art style, and storytelling. "The range of content is greater," says O'Donnell. He also encourages fans of animation to seek out *anime* in addition to, rather than instead of, their favorite Disney films. Scott's attraction to *anime* is that "It isn't written down to an audience. It's written for them."

Artistically, though, *anime* really is different—in an exciting and interesting way. While Disney favors full animation, resulting in the lifelike (if somewhat exaggerated) movement of characters, Japanese animation (with very few exceptions) tends toward limited animation. But rather than the herky-jerky movement that is the result of fewer frames per second of film, the Japanese have parlayed this limitation into a style all its own. Much is done with lighting effects and camera movement, less with actual character animation. *Anime* is not an imitation of life, but an iconization of it.

Finally, there's subject matter. *Anime* ranges from anthologies like *Robot Carnival* (within which are a multitude of styles and stories) to horror such as *Vampire Hunter D*, to broad parody of both Japanese and Western sci-fi in *Project A-Ko*, to space sagas such as *Wings of Honneamise*, to romantic fantasy in the upcoming *Oh, My Goddess*. There has even been an animated soap opera, *Maison Ikkaku*.

Fans of *anime* have become fans because they see something in it they like, whether it is the art, the stories, or just because it isn't the same old thing. Newer converts have enjoyed it for the novelty or the wit or the drama. Fans of fantasy and science fiction films will find the same things in *anime* that attracted them to other genres—a process that John O'Donnell calls "the expansion of possibilities." And isn't that what those genres are all about? □

Lea Hernandez, who has worked on Japanese animation and comics in both the U.S. and Japan, operates Studio Morning Glory in Oakland, California.

Japanese Animation Week begins Monday, May 23 at 9pm (ET) on the Sci-Fi Channel.

*Twenty-first-century combat sweeps across Earth's sister planet in Venus Wars, an epic of the future in which Venus has been colonized into two hostile nations, each bent on her rival's annihilation.*

Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters*

of *the Third Kind* has changed

the way we look at UFOs—and the way we

look at sci-fi movies.

# WHEN SAUCERS WERE YOUNG

BY STEVE RUBIN



**A**LARGE GROUP OF SCIENTISTS in white smocks are shading their eyes as they nervously take a step forward, toward a blinding white light. As brass music builds to a crescendo in the background, something appears in a rapidly enlarging hatchway.

The tension is unbearable. Could this be the missing link to an alien civilization? Or the flight crew of a mother ship from another galaxy?

And then, through the steam, the camera focuses on the visitor. It's the new 1994 Plymouth Neon, which debuted in a Super Bowl commercial this past January. Some things never change.

Steven Spielberg's third theatrical film, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, went into production 18 years ago, but it has lost little of its effect or influence on pop culture. Even though *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* would eclipse its box-office performance and inspire theme park rides and a galaxy of promotional items, *Close Encounters* remains the seminal UFO film of our time—a motion picture that at once dramatizes mankind's fascination with outer space and the possibility of life on other planets.

The debut of *Close Encounters* on two screens in New York and Los Angeles in November 1977 was more of an event than

a mere theatrical release. After a decade in the doldrums, science fiction films had made an astounding comeback that year, with the earlier smash summer release of the first *Star Wars* sending audiences through the theater turnstiles in record numbers.

But *Close Encounters* was a \$19-million calculated risk on the part of nearly bankrupt Columbia Pictures. Although Steven Spielberg had scored heavily two years before with *Jaws*, there was no reason to believe at that time that he had the Midas touch. Producer Michael Phillips, then partnered with his wife, Julia, remembers the pressure he felt 18 Novembers ago:

"The whole studio's future was riding on the film. At the time, I think Columbia's stock was selling at \$2 a share, and there were 6 million shares. The company was worth only \$12 million!

"We ended up sneaking the picture in Dallas, and, if you recall, the movie opens with a prolonged musical chord with a crescendo at the end, leading into the desert sandstorm. We stood in the back of the packed theater, and the audience applauded after that opening. We then knew they were on our side. It was a tremendously rewarding moment."

Starting the film in a sandstorm made perfect sense to Steven Spielberg, who grew up in the windy deserts of northern Arizona and early in his life was an ardent stargazer and amateur astronomer. Spielberg spent much of his youth studying the heavens, and like many of the science fiction filmmakers of the 1950s whose works he saw at his local theater, he was forever influenced by the mystery of the desert and the amazing vistas that greeted him every evening in



All photos: Jeff Skibant, SMI Things



**A** reunited Jillian and Barry Guiler (Melinda Dillon and Cary Guffey, above) watch the Mother Ship depart at *Close Encounters*' awe-inspiring conclusion. In the film's "Special Edition" (left), Spielberg dispensed with fancy fx in this forced-perspective shot of the desert-bound Cottopaxi.



**S**couting "baby" ships disrupt the tranquility of a Middle American night. Ever since his earliest youthful attempts at filmmaking, Spielberg has been fascinated by UFOs.

the night sky. Indeed, one of his earliest works, created on 8-mm film, the ambitious two-and-a-half hour epic *Firelight*, portrayed a scientific investigation into the sightings of strange lights in the sky.

Spielberg and the phenomenon of UFO "sightings" have something else in common. They both were born in 1947. Six months before Spielberg's birth in Cincinnati, Ohio, Kenneth Arnold, a private pilot, coined the term "flying saucer" when he spotted several discs skipping over mountaintops in Washington State.

A few weeks later the U.S. Army Air Force issued a press release stating that they had found the remains of a flying saucer a few miles from their nuclear base in Roswell, New Mexico. Although the Army later claimed the report was false, prompting one of this century's great coverups, the flying saucer scare of the 1950s had begun. Thousands of sightings were reported over the next 20 years, and Hollywood found a new genre to play with.

By 1976, flying saucer sightings were no longer the sole province of swamp-dwelling schizophrenics and H.G. Wells enthusiasts. They were routinely reported by state troopers, airline pilots, astronauts, and even presidents (Jimmy Carter claimed he saw a UFO when he was governor of Georgia).

But it had been a quarter of a century since Klaatu and his 9-foot-tall robot Gort had emerged from a saucer in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. An updated film depicting an extraterrestrial visitation was in order. Spielberg delivered boldly.

*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* dramatizes a potential encounter between friendly ETs (extra-terrestrials) and sympathetic humans. Rather than match the aliens against the military or armed citizen groups, Spielberg introduced a group of ordinary Midwesterners, the proverbial next-door types.

Spielberg later told *Cinefantastique* journalist Don Shay, "A favorite theme of mine has always been the ultimate glorification of the common man—the Cary Grant character from *North by Northwest*, or even the Roy Scheider character in *Jaws*. A typical guy—nothing ever happens to him. Then, all of a sudden, he encounters something extraordinary and has to change his entire life in order to measure up to the task of either defeating it or understanding it. So that was my theme in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*."

Richard Dreyfuss is Spielberg's "everyman." He plays Roy Neary, a likable family man from Muncie, Indiana, who's married to straitlaced Teri Garr, has three uncontrollable children, and works for the local power company. This is not a family that needs or seeks a UFO encounter. But one night in Muncie, Roy has the encounter of his life.

Segueing from a Mexican senior citizen who sports a strange sunburn and mutters in Spanish that "the sun came out last night and sang to me," Spielberg cuts to air traffic control at Indianapolis Airport, where dialogue between the controller and two

mystified airline pilots conjures up an eerie vision of a UFO.

Like Steven King, Spielberg introduces us to amazing phenomena against a familiar documentary-like backdrop, employing believable up-to-date technical jargon that puts us right in that air traffic controller's chair and convinces us that this could really be happening. When the UFO flies past one of the airliners and we hear the *whoosh* of static in the controller's headphones, we feel the chill right up the back of our spine, and there were a number of similar *whooshes* to come in *Close Encounters*.

One memorable scene takes place in the upstairs bedroom of impish Barry Guiler, who wakes up in the middle of the night when his electrical toys come to life. Every possible battery-powered toy of the period starts to move across the floor, over the edge of shelves, and under the bed of his mother (Melinda Dillon). Guiler, portrayed marvelously by youngster Cary Guffey, is reminiscent of young Jimmy Hunt, the boy who watches a flying saucer disappear into a sandpit behind his house in the classic 1953 *Invaders from Mars*—one of Spielberg's favorite films.

Recalls propmaster Sam Gordon: "All of Barry's toys were available on the market at the time, except for the Frankenstein whose pants kept falling down. That was one of Steven's personal toys, and he insisted that we use it."

When remembering their favorite moments in the film, people often forget whether they're describing the original film or the "Special Edition" which was released a few years later, complete with previously unseen footage. This practice of rereleasing a film in a new version was unprecedented

at the time of *Close Encounters* but is now a standard event, especially for home video and laser disc releases.

Bob Short, who won an Oscar for designing the special makeup effects for *Beetlejuice*, was an fx artist on that "Special Edition" version of *Close Encounters*. "The shot that impressed me the most," he recalls, "was the shot of the *Cot-topaxi*—the big freighter that's found in the desert. What I like about that shot was that there were no opticals involved. It was a forced-perspective shot, just like they did in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. They simply placed a 20-foot freighter in the foreground sand, and Steven filmed live-action full-sized helicopters, jeeps, and people in the background. It looks like a real beached freighter, but it was just a miniature."

Once Roy Neary joins forces with Jillian Guiler to find her abducted son, *Close Encounters* becomes a frantic chase picture that leads us to Devil's Tower in Wyoming, where the scientists, led by Claude Lacombe (Francois Truffaut), have created their secret landing and observation field. That field was built inside a former blimp hangar in Mobile, Alabama. Set photographer Peter Sorel still remembers his impression of that set:

"It was the biggest set I'd ever seen, and at the very top the construction department had hung a banner which said, 'Not since Cecil B. DeMille'—which emphasized the fact that this was the biggest set constructed for a Hollywood film in 20 years.

"There also was a lot of secrecy about the movie. We all had picture ID's, probably the first in the history of the business, and Steven allowed me to take pictures of the alien children, but I couldn't develop them. They had to be frozen until an assistant hand-carried them to an LA lab, where they were developed under the strictest supervision. We weren't taking any chances."

Editor Michael Kahn worked with Steven Spielberg for the first time on *Close Encounters*. Eighteen Spielberg collaborations later, he's been nominated for an Oscar for *Schindler's List*, having already won for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Remembers Kahn: "I lived with Steven in Mobile, and our den was the editing room. Truffaut came in one day to look at some film, and he saw the amount of film we were using and said that he could make three pictures with what we had.

"I remember being present when John Williams played five different five-note tones for Steven to choose. It was a piece of history; I think I saved the tape. By the end of that show, we were all looking up at the sky. We wanted to get the picture done before a real mother ship landed. The film was so convincing that it got us thinking in that way."

Nearly two decades after *Close Encounters*



of the *Third Kind* was released, mankind is still waiting for "official" contact from outer space. Unofficially, though, thousands of people already believe we've been visited and studied. Even as this story is being written, a congressman from New Mexico has reopened the investigation into the Roswell flying saucer crash in '47, intent on seeking new evidence of a real close encounter. (Showtime Network will release *Roswell* this summer, a made-for-cable film based on that incident.) Meanwhile, UFO experts, journalists, and ordinary citizens alike are convinced that the U.S. government maintains a top secret facility somewhere in the Nevada desert, where several captured saucers are being studied.

One thing is certain: if saucers ever do find their way to the Mall in Washington, D.C., or to Times Square, or to a lonely mountain landmark in Wyoming, the peo-

**R**eaching out to touch Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss), the film's visiting extraterrestrials provide dramatic contrast to the "Menace from Space" tradition (above). The strange looking beings turn out to be childlike and benign. Like incipient E. T.'s, their wide-eyed curiosity (left) reflects our own.

ple assigned to greet the visitors will not be the same terrified citizens who ran off into the mountains during the 1938 Orson Welles *War of the Worlds* broadcast, or who screamed each time a 1950s-style alien invader appeared on the movie screen. No, they'll probably be closer to the all-knowing Francois Truffaut type of scientist, viewing potential alien contact with great anticipation and an amazing sense of wonder and hope. If a director's vision can remove the guns and tanks from our planet's welcoming committee, then *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* will have done its job quite well. □

Steve Rubin is a documentary filmmaker, author, and talk-show host. He wrote and directed *Return to 'The Great Escape'*, a thirtieth-anniversary tribute to the classic POW drama, which appeared on the Showtime Network last summer.

*Close Encounters, the theatrical version, airs on the Sci-Fi Channel Saturday, June 11, at 8pm and midnight (ET). The Special Edition airs on Sunday, June 12, at 3pm. (ET).*



K. Wright

# THE MASK

BY DON. E. PETERSON

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN, BUT STANLEY IPKISS (JIM Carrey) takes those little quirks in stride. After all, the lime-colored fellow is one step removed from a Tex Avery cartoon and two movies removed from the revolutionary computer technology originated in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* and *Jurassic Park*.

But Ipikiss is no *Jurassic* lark either—he's the star of New Line Cinema's *The Mask*, the little \$20-million dollar movie that could very well prove this summer that state of the art doesn't necessarily have to cost \$80 million and have a big-name director to gain super box-office acceptance.

"We're getting a hell of a lot on the screen for the money," admits director Chuck Russell. "I think there's a lot of unnecessary studio overhead. Basically if you go out and make a high-end movie, you have to use the best person in every department and the costs of your film escalates. So the best production designer is using the best art director and using the best material and using the best crews, and suddenly, that art department is spending

10 times the money I'm spending doing roughly the same film. But I don't have the luxury of bringing in an Italian visionary who's turned into a production designer. I have to come up with a lot once I've seen the locations, to pull it all together and design my sets within existing Deco L.A. buildings instead of building everything from scratch."

Holed up in a skimpy Burbank office complex finishing up the last

third of the editing on *The Mask*, Russell is creating movie history whether he realizes it or not. While principal photography has commenced, an entirely new movie is forming as pieces of the puzzle are being sent daily to him from Industrial Light and Magic's (ILM) Northern California facilities. Fine tuning various computer-generated sequences that morph the Ipikiss character in a variety of ways are the main concern. On average, Russell receives a daily videotape consisting of five to six different shots that ILM's whiz kids Steve Williams and Clint Goldman are perfecting for the film. Russell then reviews them via a phone hookup for further suggestions and final approval. Much like *Jurassic Park*, building the perfect beast entails many failed attempts, according to the director,





and sometimes requires starting from scratch on the animators' part if something doesn't work properly.

"This movie came at exactly the right time in terms of this effects technology," says Russell. "The guys at ILM said six months ago they wouldn't have even attempted this picture. Computer technology now gives soft imagery and doesn't look like *TRON* anymore. We can do dinosaurs, and that means if you use your head and money and time wisely, it's kind of unlimited to what you can do on screen. Between Jim Carrey and being able to use this kind of technology for comedy and these bizarre hallucinogenic visuals we've been developing for *The Mask*, it's a case of being at the right place at the right time."

Luckily the story for *The Mask* lends

itself to this wild new technological application. Based on the underground cult Dark Horse comic, the concept went through the usual development machinery before it landed with Russell and his bent take on the material.

"When New Line was originally developing the picture, my impression was they were sticking closely to the comic and going for a darker approach," says Russell, who was initially contacted in these early stages but was busy developing the William Gibson novel *Neuromancer* at Tri-Star. Luckily, he was offered *The Mask* again when his schedule was free and given full control to rethink the whole concept. "It worked out perfectly because if I would have made it back then, the technology wouldn't have been there and I don't know if we could have gotten Jim then. I would have probably

had to fight them to make it a comedy, but by the time I came back they were ready for anything. So I brought in a whole new storyline, used the same character of the Mask, introduced a bunch of new characters, made it more mainstream, and upscaled the whole picture."

Though taking an established comic book character and bringing him to the screen can be a fifty-fifty prospect (especially if it's a well-known mainstay like Batman), *The Mask* doesn't carry a lot of excess baggage since it's from a smaller, independent publisher.

"We're definitely not dealing with *Superman* here," says Russell. "We're not even doing *Batman*, where you do

*FAR LEFT: After encountering the supernatural powers of "The Mask," Stanley Ipkiss (Jim Carrey) wants answers from Dr. Arthur Newman (Ben Stein).*

*ABOVE: Jim Carrey has his normally expressive face made outrageously more so through the computer fx of ILM.*

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ILM animators Steve Williams and Clint Goldman found that computer morphing sequences required frequent trial and error, and sometimes had to start over from scratch.

a complete battle of reality and every department has to create its own reality. We basically chose a story that I could tell in a spectacular fashion. Ipkiss' life doesn't demand that I create a new world in every scene. I put the money where it would pay off. Every moment isn't designed to blow you away, but when the fireworks start, and when the Mask goes on, it's all going to be up on screen."

In the end, the original concept of an everyday man transformed into a green-faced vigilante through a special mask naturally derailed off into a much zanier direction, especially with the rubbery-faced Carrey in the lead.

"There was an element of urban revenge that I enjoyed about the comic, and I wanted to do the comedy version of it and use Jim's wild, physical humor," says Russell. "Although *The Mask* comic has a lot of humor, his revenge leads to killing people. It's more Freddy Krueger type 'death and a punchline' formula than what we've done. I wanted to do something that was more at heart a comedy than a horror film."

What Russell ultimately found at the center of the story was a Jekyll and Hyde tale with Ipkiss representing the "everyman."

"As things get more aggressive, as

traffic gets worse, as banks get ruder and we're stuck in worse and worse jobs making less and less money in smaller and smaller apartments, there comes a point where you can't take it anymore," explains Russell. "And Stanley is trying to get by and do well and be a good guy by doing what's right in life. He's finally in a position where he can't do that anymore, and when he puts on the Mask, he just explodes. His character is pretty unique. He becomes this very flashy sort of character. He's very mischievous. He's very dangerous and all the people who cross him, from his boss at the bank, to the mechanics that took advantage of him with his car, get their comeuppance in very funny ways."

Not everyone reacts the same when the Mask is placed on their face, notes Russell, who carefully refined a logical mythology for the film.

"I believe any science fiction or fantasy film needs to have internal logic," he observes. "H.G. Wells once wrote, 'When anything is possible, nothing is interesting,' and what I take that to mean is, you don't have to hit the audience over the head with stuff but you better know your own rules. So you can get away with certain things in the comic but when you bring it to the big screen it will make no sense. So what the bottom line is, when you put the Mask on, whatever is inside you is released. Mother Theresa, if she put on

the Mask tomorrow, would break into a jitterbug on the streets of New Delhi. If inside you're a repressed psycho killer, watch out. If you always wanted to be a love child, then something else will happen. So all this is physically realized and is very magical."

While producing the Rodney Dangerfield comedy *Back to School* in 1986, Russell became aware of stand-up comic Carrey's wonderful talent. Though he didn't have a part for him in that movie, he knew one day he wanted to utilize the actor's manic energy and persona. When it came down to rewriting *The Mask* with Mike Werb, he kept Carrey in mind.

"Sometimes you get somebody in your head and it helps in the writing of the script," says Russell, who was pleased when Carrey worked it out so he could star in the movie. "I think Jim has a touch of some of these old silent film comedians. He reminds me of Harold Lloyd, and he leans toward the classics from the Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton days. This is a guy who can go from the standing position to a human pretzel at will."

By the same token, Russell was quite aware that the Ipkiss character would be placed under some heavy makeup restraints but didn't want Carrey to be lost in the appliance, so



he went with Academy Award-winning fx artist Greg Cannom.

"There were other guys who are a little less expensive that actually could execute a design this simple, but I believed no one could have made it as technically flexible as Greg Cannom," says Russell. "The thing with Jim Carrey is his face is like rubber anyway and it would be nuts to hide it. A great deal of what's funny about him is what he does with his face in his performances. So the key in preproduction was how to get the look for a unique character and give it an identity but still let Carrey have all the flexibility of his own features."

The final design included a ridged eyebrow for Carrey and a heavy bone structure in the face that enhanced the actor's normal features.

"I wanted him to be handsome in a very bizarre way," notes Russell. "So we gave him a Kirk Douglas cleft chin. *The Mask* is kind of frightening and dashing at the same time. It's one of the reason I was attracted to the comic book character and I think we were able to achieve that with the design."

After Cannom's work was completed, the next step of *The Mask* was executed by the computer geniuses at ILM. With techniques like those used on *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, Russell had to film everything that was supposed to be happening in the background on the spot, which was then manipulated and smoothed out by computer work during the final stages.

"Computer graphics, if you shoot

the material correctly are primarily a post-production event," he says. "It slows you down in principal photography, but that's only because you have to block out everything carefully. We're basically shooting things that don't exist. I had to do a lot of visualizing for my actors on what the physics were for the Mask, especially when it would happen during the computer graphics mode or when magical things that couldn't possibly appear on the set were happening. We had to create interactive set pieces and blocking so there was some form for the events so they'd look real. Steve Williams at ILM in particular has been super to work with and we've been literally chuckling with glee as we design some of the crazier stuff. There's always been a sense with the final designs of 'do we dare do this, is this too crazy,' but we've inspired each other to be even riskier with the look."

Thus in the final movie, Jim Carrey will be doing amazing things that only computer graphics can buy. He can change and manipulate his face into other forms and shapes at will (even more so than Carrey does without computer trickery), he can transform animal balloons into Tommy guns, and he can even dodge bullets with a single rubbery bound. The sky was the limit, affirms Russell, and he feels that along with ILM, those boundaries were pushed effectively. "It's fascinating because I'm asking for things in a log-



TOP: Gangsters of *Edge City* take on the Mask with guns blazing. ABOVE: Tina Carlyle (Cameron Diaz), a gangster's girlfriend, falls for hero Stanley Ipkiss. Lucky guy.

ical progression from the designs we're trying to achieve that are just brand new and Steve will tell me it's never been done before," says Russell. "It's very exciting for me that so far it's been successful.

What we're trying to do is take cartoon physics and make them photo real, which has been one of the challenges of the film. I've always imagined the Mask as a Tex Avery character, and we refer to a lot of those golden age cartoons and get some of the manic energy of some of those cartoons. And we use both Jim Carrey's natural physical ability, ILM, and my imagination to pull it off, and it's going together beautifully."

While *The Mask* promises to be the next stage in computer graphics technology, it is also a testament to the filmmaker and New Line Cinema that the multimillion-dollar effects didn't skyrocket to the outer limits as they did on *Jurassic Park* and *Terminator 2*.

Continued on page 63

# THE ULTIMATE JOE DANTE INTERVIEW

BY MAITLAND MCDONAGH

**B**ORN IN MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY, IN 1947, JOE DANTE no longer looks like a kid. But he still looks much younger than he actually is, and retains the mannerisms of a guy who can't believe he got into the movie business and succeeded. No one seems to have a bad word to say about him; even the notoriously sharp-tongued Barbara Steele, sadomasochistic madonna of genre filmmaking, had nothing but praise following her appearance in his *Piranha*.

Dante's office is cluttered with toys and movie memorabilia, and his *Matinee* is a loving homage to William Castle, Roger Corman, and the exploitation movies of the late '50s and early '60s. *Matinee's* centerpiece is *Mant!* ("Half Man! Half Ant! All Terror!"), a movie-within-the-movie, a spot-on homage to the monster movies he loved as a child.

A self-confessed movie buff, TV addict, and comic book fan, Dante studied to be a cartoonist, and remains a vocal enthusiast of animation, Warner Brothers cartoons in particular. Among the projects he hasn't yet been able to realize, he says, is *Termite Terrace*, a script by Charlie Haas loosely based on Chuck Jones' book about his career as a Warner Brothers cartoonist in the '30s, and the creation of Bugs Bunny, and Tex Avery....

Widely perceived as a Steven Spielberg protégé, Dante is in fact an authentic product of the Roger Corman school of film making on the run. Spielberg (who reportedly considered Dante's *Piranha*, produced by Corman, the best of the *Jaws* knockoffs) pro-

The director of  
*Gremlins*, *Explorers*,  
*Innerspace*, and  
*The Howling* grew up  
loving monster movies,  
and he's remained  
true to his roots.

duced *Gremlins*, the commercial hit that made Dante a player, and Dante has worked with him several times since. But unlike Chris Columbus (*Young Sherlock Holmes*) or William Dear (*Harry and the Hendersons*), Dante had sensibilities when he met up with Spielberg, sensibilities with a dark edge. A member of the second wave of Corman graduates, Dante cut his teeth on trailers, editing coming attractions for New World releases, a heady mix of foreign art films and home grown exploitation.

Dante's first three films have all generated sequels: *Piranha 2: The Spawning* is the skeleton in James (*The Terminator*) Cameron's closet, and *The Howling* rivals Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* for sheer numbers (*Howling VI: The Freaks* was recently released); *Hollywood Boulevard 2* was a vehicle for porn





All photos: Jeff Siskant, Sci-Fi Things

**L**ike this turtle-shaped alien spaceship, the 1985 boys-in-space film *Explorers* was a typical Dantean blend of wonder, whimsy and farce. Unlike his collaborations with Steven Spielberg, working under a studio “committee” on this film proved to be an unpleasant experience for Dante.

star Ginger Lynn’s transition to mainstream exploitation, if such a term exists. Dante himself has avoided sequels—he resisted making *Gremlins 2* for years and undertook the project determined to top the original; many reviewers felt he succeeded admirably—but pays frequent homage to his exploitation roots. One need only look at the casts of his movies, studded with exploitation favorites, to see that he hasn’t forgotten where he came from.

Dante has had his own production company, Renfield (named, of course, after Dracula’s crazed disciple), and is ensconced in a shaded bungalow on the Universal lot.

**MCDONAGH:** So it all began when you were in college with the “All-Night-Once-in-a-Lifetime-Atomic-Movie-Orgy,” right?

**DANTE:** The seven-hour-movie-designed-to-be-walked-in-and-out-of-at-any-time-and-you-wouldn’t-really-miss-anything. It was made up of about seven different movies all cut together, plus intros to TV shows, commercials, outtakes...a real mélange. And because we presented it year after year, the components changed. TV shows from the early days of the medium were a par-

ticular revelation to an audience that had never seen them. I spent my childhood parked in front of the television, absorbing the most amazing things, and with the *Movie Orgy* I felt, in a way, as though I was exporting my culture.

**MCDONAGH:** You also did a great deal of writing early in your career; in fact, you were a lowly film critic.

**DANTE:** I was indeed, and that certainly is the phrase, at least as I practiced writing. I wrote for the late lamented *Castle of Frankenstein* magazine. After you’d read three pages, you had to go wash your hands because the paper was so cheap that the ink came off. Even the pictures were smudgy. Later I reviewed for *Film Bulletin*, a trade magazine. I saw virtually every picture that came out between 1968 and 1974, when I moved out to California, with Jon Davison and Jonathan Kaplan and some other people recommended by Marty Scorsese.

I went out with great trepidation, first for a summer, to see what making trailers was like. I wasn’t actually allowed to edit, because they had a union editor there, a situation that Roger quickly reme-

**S**uperior to An American Werewolf in London in everything but budget, 1981's *The Howling* featured dozens of horror movie in-jokes and a technically innovative transformation scene (right) created by Rob Bottin. FAR RIGHT: Yielding to studio pressure and the promise "you can do whatever you want," in 1990 Dante made *Gremlins 2: The New Batch*.



died, but he hadn't remedied it yet. My first project was *Student Teachers*. I watched the film, outlined the trailer, and the editor cut to my outline. The *Student Teachers* trailer must be five minutes long; when you start cutting trailers you want to use every good thing from the movie, to give it all away....By the time you get to your own films, it's exactly the opposite. You're always saying to whoever's doing the trailer, "No, no, no...don't give that away!"

It was a weird time at New World, because Roger was distributing quite the eclectic roster of pictures. One day you'd be cutting a women in cages trailer and the next day you'd be cutting *Cris and Whispers*.

MCDONAGH: I remember you once saying you added an exploding helicopter to every trailer you did at New World...

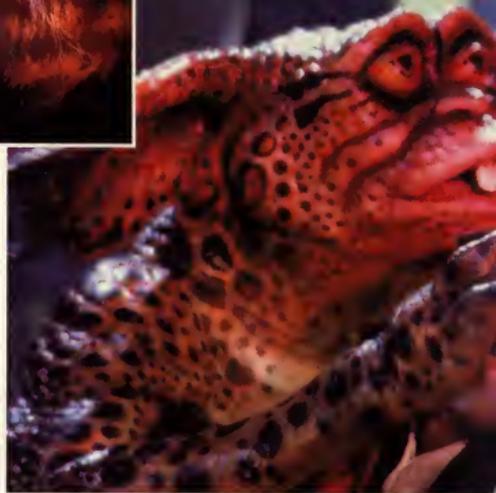
DANTE: It wasn't quite like that. A lot of the pictures Roger was making and distributing at the time were extremely low-budget pictures. They looked and sounded cheap. By just showing a scene from the movie in the trailer, you were turning off the audience, which was presumably not what you were trying to do. So Allan Arkush and I hit on a system whereby if the picture didn't seem to have anything going for it, we would kind of make up a plot, putting in scenes from other pictures.

I think we got the notorious exploding helicopter out of *Cover Girl Models*, a Filipino movie. It was a pretty cheesy helicopter explosion that might even have been a miniature, but it was the savior of that trailer. So when other pictures came along that didn't make it, we'd turn to the helicopter. The funny thing was that it always fit. It was a mildly deceptive way of making a living.

Meanwhile, Allan and I wanted to make a picture for Roger, who really wasn't that keen on letting us out of the trailer department. The only way he was willing to let us make a picture was if it was the cheapest movie ever made at New World. That was no mean feat; I mean, budgets had gone up since the days of *Little Shop of Horrors*, which was made for something like \$30,000. We said we could make a picture for \$60,000, and he agreed, but of course we didn't have a picture yet; we had to figure out what we could do for that money that would be releasable.

So we decided to build a movie around action sequences from movies Roger already owned. We didn't even have to go into the archives to see what was there; all we had to do was run our trailers. We made a movie about a movie company because it was the only way we could make sense of all this disparate footage. We had war movies, jungle movies, science fiction movies...all kinds of stuff. The movie company story was also great because we could use our equipment as props and our crew as background cast. We shot the whole thing in ten days, and we only wound up using about eight minutes of footage from other pictures, when we'd thought we were going to need a half hour.

The next thing Roger was doing was TV editions of pictures. He was trying to sell a Steve Carver picture, *Big Bad Mama*, to televi-



sion, and it needed to be cut to ribbons because it was full of nudity and Roger wanted to sell it for syndication; this was before cable. Anyway, I was gearing up to do about 15 minutes of new footage with Dick Miller for *Big Bad Mama*, to replace the stuff that was coming out, when something happened and the project fell through. There were two projects on the New World slate at that time: *Rock 'n' Roll High School* and *Piranha*. I would rather have done *Rock 'n' Roll High School*, which Allan and I had done the story for, but Allan really wanted it. Truthfully, he did a better job with it than I would have anyway.

So I inherited *Piranha*, which was a bad idea and a rotten script. The first script was so bad that I convinced Roger to get rid of it, and we hired John Sayles, who had never done a script before. John solved the main script problem, which was how to get people back into the water once the piranhas had been discovered. Roger insisted on a piranha attack at regular intervals, so we wound up with two climaxes. One, when they attack a summer camp and kill enough kids for five pictures, and two, a big attack on a resort, which we had to have because they had one in *Jaws* and it meant the piranhas could attack girls in bathing suits.

Now, John and I thought this was all pretty stupid, so we contrived to make it as funny as possible. We had to shoot in Texas, which was a right-to-work state, meaning you could shoot non-union, though we still had a lot of union problems.

Once we got the rubber fish right—we spent months on the bottom of a swimming pool with [special effects artists] Chris Walas



and Rob Bottin and John Berg and Phil Tippit and all these guys who went on to do *Star Wars*—I went off to Texas, where everything went wrong. I was convinced I was making the worst movie in history and that it was going to be a huge flop. Then I had to go back and cut it myself, which was a devastating experience. I thought it was so bad I didn't even go to the wrap party. I was still editing, because I thought it needed every second of attention I could give it before the deadline. Anyway, *Piranha* turned out not to be so bad and made some money, though Roger only paid me \$8,000 to direct it.

The next job I was offered, which was at Dino DeLaurentis' directing *Orca II*, was going to pay me \$50,000. Well I'll tell you, I was pretty impressed. It was another fish movie, but there wasn't anybody knocking down my door asking me to do anything else, so I was thinking about it. But I had this ear infection and I really didn't want to go in the water anymore....*Orca II* fell through and I was offered *Jaws: 3—People 0*, which was a *National Lampoon* horror-picture/comedy *Jaws*-spoof. I got to work with the *National Lampoon* organization, and David Brown and Richard Zanuck, who had produced *Jaws*, and with various honchos at Universal. I had never worked at a major studio before, and it was a very interesting, very depressing experience. Everybody wanted to make a different picture, and everybody treated me as the hired help. They called me in one day to show me my storyboards, every shot in the film drawn out carefully, and I had never seen them before.

It was at that time that another project came to my attention: *The*

*Howling*. There was another director attached to it—he had acquired the book and owned the property—but he wasn't working out and they wanted to get rid of him. We first approached [effects artist] Rick Baker about doing the werewolf makeup, and he was interested because he'd been talking for years about doing a werewolf movie with John Landis and nothing had ever come of it. I think about an hour after we had lunch with him Rick spoke to John Landis, who was appalled to find out that Rick was going to use his years of makeup secrets on *The Howling* and not on his movie. I believe it was during that phone call that John made up a title and an opening date and told Rick the picture was a go. Then he actually went ahead and did it. So we didn't get Rick, we got Rob Bottin. It was his first big job and he was wonderful, although the makeup took, like, two days to apply. We were woefully behind schedule all the time.

In the end it worked out well, though. John Sayles rewrote the script again; it was a pretty bad book to start with and another writer had already thrown away most of the plot. John suggested putting the werewolves in that kind of est retreat, and once we had that idea, everything else came together.

**McDONAGH:** It's been suggested that *Jaws* was the first of the A-movies that were really B-movies in disguise.

**DANTE:** *Jaws* was *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* for adults. And *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *Star Wars*: big-budget versions of pictures that had already been made on small budgets. And at the same time you saw the growth of the notion of movies



**W**inner of an Academy Award for Best Visual Effects, 1987's *Innerspace*, starring Randy Quaid, was a hipper, flipper *Fantastic Voyage*. A lifelong genre movie fan, Dante filled the smaller roles with—as Steven Spielberg remarked—“every B actor in Hollywood.”

as spectacle. Not character pieces, but shows built around loud noises and expensive optics—to a degree that’s probably abated now, but nothing has come up to take its place. Those character pieces are going direct to cable, to Showtime and HBO. It leaves you, the filmmaker, wondering what to make.

The studios have become totally cost-conscious, but they still want a lot of bang for the buck. They just don’t want to spend as many bucks. They’re faced with the fact that five to ten years ago, movies could be made with real state-of-the-art everything that today, to produce on a comparable scale, would cost much more than they’re prepared to spend.

**McDONAGH:** One of the bad things about the current system is that it moves very slowly, so every film takes at least a year to put together—often more—and so much rides on every picture.

**DANTE:** It’s true. *The ‘Burbs* was a picture that I would probably never have made if I hadn’t just suffered the falling apart of something else. I wanted to make a movie, and *The ‘Burbs* came along. You’re not a director if you aren’t directing. One of the things about working for Roger was that when you made a film for him,

no matter how badly you messed up, the thing got pulled together and released and you got a chance to look at what you did wrong, fix it, learn from your mistakes, and still have a commercial credit. You learned and built a track record and the whole world didn’t have to see you do it. Now you see these young filmmakers in the horribly visible position of being at the head of enormously expensive films that are minefields just waiting to blow them to pieces. You know, things go wrong with movies, and it isn’t always the director’s fault. People make mistakes, but if you make them on a \$45 million picture, it’s a lot harder to get forgiven.

**McDONAGH:** *Innerspace* seems to embody that notion of making bigger, better versions of things people saw as kids.

**DANTE:** Sure, and it also says something about the short memory of the industry in another respect. When *The Howling* was originally proposed to me by Dan Blatt, the producer, he said, “Oh, this is gonna be great. People turn into animals; just think about that!” And I had to explain to him that there had already been a whole bunch of movies where people turned into animals—and he was shocked. The same thing was true of Peter Guber, whose idea *Innerspace* was. When he proposed *Innerspace* to me, he’d been reading books about the body and didn’t know there had already been a picture about a voyage through the body; he had no idea. We had to proceed as though there hadn’t been one, and frankly I don’t think that *Fantastic Voyage* was a very good picture, so I wasn’t intimidated. Our idea was not to make a picture that was about going through the human body, but to make a picture about these two guys and their relationship.

**McDONAGH:** You’ve worked on a number of projects with Steven Spielberg, who’s known for his sense of childlike wonder. You come out of an exploitation background. Do you see a contradiction?

**DANTE:** That’s what everybody says. The line on *Gremlins* was that it was mean-spirited, and I do have a darker view than Steven does. But I think he likes that, likes the fact that there’s a contrast. I don’t think the pictures I make for Steven are just like all the other pictures other people make for him. And the great thing about working for Steven is that when you work for Steven you don’t have to work for anybody else.

*Gremlins*, I think, would not have been made quite the same way

*Continued on page 62*

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Straight on Till  
The Morning," a  
painting by  
Michael David  
Ward that was  
inspired by *Star  
Trek VI: The Undis-  
covered Country*.



*Michael David Ward*



# Trek Gallery

*You don't have to be  
a lifelong fan to produce  
Trek Art...but it helps.*

I'VE BEEN A STAR TREK FAN FOR AS LONG as I can remember," says Jason Palmer, who paints covers for DC Comics. "As a matter of fact, when I was a little boy, my Uncle Jimmy—who was very imaginative, and whom I had a severe case of hero worship for—would turn our house into the *Enterprise*, with complete sets built out of wood. He constructed Spock's station so that you could actually look into the viewer; he'd put different pictures in there, and you'd see a planet or sometimes a spaceship. He made the costumes; he made the props and did the lighting. And we'd all play *Star Trek*. He was the leader, so he'd be Captain Kirk, though every once in a while, as a really grand gesture, he'd let someone else be Kirk. Me? I always wanted to be Spock."

Today it's no longer just play for artists like Palmer, Keith Birdsong, Drew Struzan, Jerome Moor, and Michael David Ward, who have built careers on their talent for recreating the popular TV series in comic strips, book covers, games, movie ads, and limited-edition posters.

For Ward, a specialist in the art of reverse-glass painting, the challenge lies in depicting the limitless depths of space within the confines of a sheet of paper—a challenge that has fascinated and bedeviled artists from Gustave Doré to Alex Schomburg.

Each artist, of course, approaches the task through his own individual technique. "There are different ways of depicting space," says Palmer, "and it's always fun finding those ways, although it can be very

**BY PAT WATERSIDE**

# SCI-FI CHANNEL ENTERTAINMENT

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To transform a fidgety superstar into a werewolf, veteran makeup artist Rick Baker had decided that, this time, less is more.

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His vision is quirky, with equal parts horror and humor. His films make the studios uncomfortable. But this irreverent and outspoken director is doing exactly what he likes.



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When you're painting Star Trek pictures, the hardest things to get right are the stars—but not the kind that twinkle in the sky.

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To look at all the movies with "Dracula" in the title, you'd think they'd filmed Bram Stoker's novel dozens of times. But you'd be wrong.



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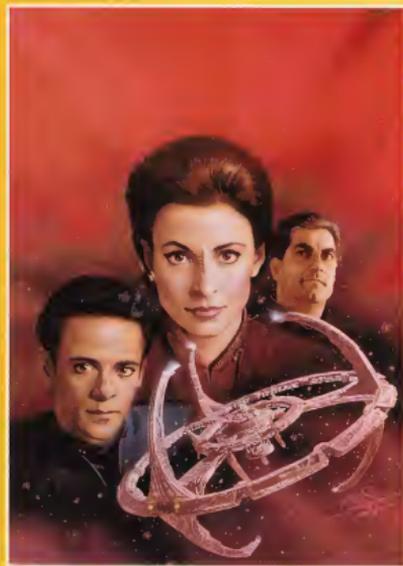


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RIGHT: Jason Palmer painted this cover for *The Star Lost*, part of DC Comics' *Star Trek: The Next Generation* series. The trail-like motif, known as an Akudagram, is named for Michael Akuda, the show's designer. BELOW: Cover art by Keith Birdsong for K.W. Jeter's *Bloodletter*—third in Pocket Books' *Deep Space Nine* line—depicts Major Kira Nerys and Dr. Julian Bashir, who confront a secret Cardassian base.



time-consuming. I try to find as many different textures as possible. Sometimes an artist uses nothing but an airbrush, or nothing but a brush—but I think that limits you. I use brush, pencil, my fingers, a sponge... anything for effect. What I sometimes do is just float the colors on my canvas with water, letting them more or less do what they want. I try to exert some control over the picture, but I'm not defining every last inch of it; I'm letting it find its own look."

Just as the look of the finished picture depends upon the medium employed, it also depends upon the unique vision of the artist. Palmer has observed that, when on occasion he and fellow illustrators Birdsong, Struzan, and Moore all work from the same *Star Trek* photo reference, each will interpret it differently.

The characters, human and otherwise, who populate the series and its several spinoffs are easily as challenging as the outer-space setting. As Jerome Moore has pointed out, the artist must strive to capture something far more essential than the mere performers on screen, decked out in their rubber ears and makeup; and Palmer agrees. "I endeavor to do the characters," he says, "not the actors. They're not

always the same thing."

It helps, of course, if the characters have already taken root in one's imagination. For Jason Palmer, now 30, this happened at an early age. "When I was in school," he recalls, "when I saw a movie over the weekend, I would spend the week drawing scenes from it, different people from it, sometimes even movie posters. So it's natural that I've ended up making my living this way."

"Unlike a lot of other artists, I didn't go directly into art. I was already working, doing an office job. But I used to doodle a lot while I was talking. My boss always wanted me to act the right way, and look the right way, and do all the right stuff—so it bugged him that I was drawing all the time. One day I came in and the big pad on my desk was gone. My boss called me into his office, and there it was. He said, 'Why do you do this?' Because it helps me concentrate,' I told him. He said, 'Well, if you want to be an artist, go be an artist. If you want to work here, work here.'

"He was just being sarcastic," Palmer recalls. "But I thought about it... And two weeks later, I gave my notice and went off to art school"—beyond which, of course, the *Enterprise* lay waiting. □

*Black Fire*, another original *Star Trek* adventure from Pocket Books, features striking cover art by veteran genre illustrator Boris Vallejo, known for brawny warriors and beautiful fantasy women as well as for his sci-fi work.



BORIS ©82

# T H E R E I S N O

*Absalom said moreover, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!"*

— 2 Samuel 15:4

**Y**ou take the 'P' out of paradise, you have Absalom—it's basically Hell," offers actor Lance Henriksen about the name of the futuristic prison his character, Father, has been sent to in the new science-fiction action movie *No Escape*. "It's a high-tech prison. If you can imagine taking Staten Island and putting a satellite over it so that if anybody ever tried to leave they'd get no more than 500 yards off shore before they were done in, this would be it."

The year is 2022 and the Leviticus Maximum Security facility has, with the help of the prison warden (Michael Lerner), come up with a twisted solution to its overcrowding—when a prisoner gets out of hand, send him off to this unsanctioned penal colony and let the savages fend for themselves.

"The question is what happens when there are prisoners you want to get rid of and put them out of sight and never hear from them again," says producer Gale Anne Hurd (*The Abyss, Terminator, Tremors*). "This island is almost used by the warden as a chess game to play with the lives of these people, and he drops our hero Robbins (Ray Liotta) in the worst possible place, an area controlled by a very barbaric gang called the Outsiders."

While the island may have its savage brutality, as Robbins learns, there is also another group called the Insiders, who have attained nirvana under the peaceful guidance of Father (Henriksen).

"He's a spiritual leader and mentor to a whole group of these inmates," says Henriksen. "My first impression was that if I got lowered into the courtyard prison at San Quentin or Folsom and had to talk to these prisoners, how would I handle that situation? Why would they listen to me? And how do you talk to a bunch of cons about their



BY J. M. TOOTS

# ESCAPE

*In No Escape, Ray Liotta (left) portrays an inmate sent to an unauthorized prison island in the year 2022. Upon his arrival he is confronted by a gang of barbaric inmates, including Stuart Wilson (right).*





lives and give them focus and meaning? So I had to solve that."

Preparing for Father both mentally and physically paid off in the character's look, which Henriksen accomplished by dyeing his hair a stark white. He even went as far as having personalized jewelry made to add further authenticity.

Nevertheless, immersing himself in his roles like this is a Henriksen trademark, which is one of the reasons he's become one of the genre's best friends and a most welcome (and

unlikely) leading man. He's best known for the role of Bishop in *Aliens* (and as Bishop's creator in its sequel *Aliens 3*). However, he's also garnered a faithful following with performances in the vampire fable *Near Dark*, the monster movie *Pumpkinhead*, the Edgar Allen Poe adaptation *The Pit and the Pendulum*, and the suspense thrillers *Jennifer 8* and *Jagged Edge*. In the coming months, he'll be seen in the noir thriller *Color of the Night* and Sam Stone Western, *The Quick and the Dead*.

"Lance is wonderful and he really becomes his characters," says Hurd,

who became enamored with his working methods while on *Aliens*. "He really cares passionately about his acting and immerses himself in every character he plays."

*No Escape* is based on the 1988 British SF novel *Penal Colony* by Richard Herley, and was brought to the attention of Hurd four years ago by executive producer Jake Eberts, who felt there was a great movie buried within the text.

"It was a wonderful premise, but it was a very English novel written by a very English writer, and I wanted to make a more international film," recalls Hurd. "The novel had the luxury of developing a character who was an accountant who sits in an office and works with numbers all day then slowly transforms him into an action hero, but they had 600 pages to do that. In a movie you have an hour and a half and you don't want to strain your credibility with the audience. So we gave the character a hard marine RECON training background because we didn't want to do a story about a guy who had to develop these skills; we wanted him to already have them."

While the obvious actor for a film like this might have been a wham bam Van Damme garden variety type who kickboxes before he speaks, Hurd was more interested in going in the opposite direction and casting an actor instead of a fighter. Ray Liotta ultimately went to the top of Hurd's list.

"I've always been a huge fan of

**TOP:** Inmates Kevin Dillon (left) and Ray Liotta struggle for survival on the hostile island. **BELOW:** Ray Liotta (right) is about to teach the prison warden (Michael Lerner) the error of his ways.



Ray's," she says. "He's tremendous and has an amazing charisma and I knew he could carry this film. And there's something interesting about him that's perfect for the role of Robins. He's someone you can identify with. His character committed a terrible offense and you can believe Ray did that, but you can also believe he can reform and find redemption which is critical. In the genre, you generally have people who have enormous physical prowess or have less physical prowess but can act. I think Ray has got both."

Principal photography for *No Escape*, under the direction of Martin Campbell (who previously worked for Hurd on the HBO movie *Cast a Deadly Spell*), commenced in Queensland and New South Wales, Australia for a 12 week shoot last May.

"We were recruited by the Queensland film location office and they said that there's this misconception that Australia is just the outback and a desert area," says Hurd who after a trip Down Under learned otherwise. "There were enormous rain forests and it was very green and lush. I had never seen anything that would have given me the impression it was like this and when we went over there, we found our locations within a week."

Much like its distant prison film cousin *Fortress*, which was also shot in Australia, *No Escape* was able to nab huge production value for a fraction of the cost with the final tally topping off at about \$20 million. Getting her start working for Roger Corman's New World Pictures ultimately helped out in this area since Hurd learned the ropes of cost-efficient filmmaking in those low-budget days.

"I think being with Corman helped in every department because I have this no-frills approach to big-budget pictures," says Hurd. "The budget on *No Escape* wasn't that of the average Hollywood feature but it does take place in the future and has a cast of thousands, and I don't think I would have been able to pull that off if I hadn't trained with Roger."

While most of the shoot went practically without incidence, there was one scary moment where the production nearly lost actor Lerner in the jungles of Queensland forever.

"We were going to shoot a sequence where the warden gets his just desserts and he's left to the mercy of the Outsiders," says Hurd. "We basically had this one shot we needed to get and the location was only accessible by helicopter. Unfortunately, the helicopter pilot that was taking Michael Lerner to the set thought he knew where he was



going, even though Michael kept saying, 'I don't really think this is where you're supposed to leave me,' but he left him there anyway. So 20 minutes went by and nobody showed up to meet Michael for the shot and there he was in the middle of the jungle where there are 250 things that could kill you. He was left there for two hours, and he told me he kept imagining that he was going to be left to live out his natural life in the rain forest because they would never be able to find him again."

For Henriksen, the locale had its drawbacks, particularly since they shot during the winter, when it was always raining.

"The mud was so deep it would suck your shoes right off your feet, so it wasn't your most pleasant shoot," says the actor. "In a way, making a movie is like an early part of a romance, without the trance, because everybody is there for a reason."

As for Hurd's knack for making



**ABOVE:** Martin Campbell gives Ray Liotta some direction as the *Darth Vader*-like prison guards wait to go into action. **LEFT:** SF movie veteran Lance Henriksen portrays *Father*, spiritual leader of the peaceful inmates.

offered scripts and roles that you really could sink your teeth into. Gale's also just got a real eye for business in making films. She takes chances and she's also courageous about her casting."

For a woman producer, only Kathleen Kennedy (a Steven Spielberg mainstay for years) has matched the scope and risks that the studios allow Hurd, and she's grateful for that.

"I think it would have been much harder if I hadn't been prepared by

## The year is 2022 and the Leviticus Maximum Security facility has solved its overcrowding problems...

gold out of odd premises (she was the producer behind the tongue-and-cheek *Tremors* and the sci-fi buddy cop *Alien Nation*), Henriksen respects her abilities particularly since she broke him into the mainstream.

"*Aliens* got me into a different class within the genre," the actor says. "From that point on I started getting

Roger Corman," she admits. "I knew I had the skills, and with *Terminator*, we had the right story and the right director with Jim. *Aliens* really cemented my reputation as a commercial action science fiction producer. Now I'm in the enviable position with the respect that the studios trust me with the movies I want to make." □

# WILL THE REAL Dracula PLEASE STAND UP?

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

**DESPITE  
70 YEARS  
OF MOVIE  
DRACULAS,  
BRAM  
STOKER'S  
ORIGINAL  
CREATION  
HAS YET TO  
BE BROUGHT  
TO THE  
SCREEN.**

**W**OULD BRAM STOKER BE able to recognize his own most famous creation these days? I reread the original novel *Dracula* recently, amid all the discussions of the alleged authenticity of Francis Ford Coppola's curiously mistitled film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. While the film borrows many incidents from the novel, it is the most variant adaptation yet to appear. In spirit, and particularly in its presentation of the characters, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is a wholly original creation.

The 1897 novel is still a grand read after all this time. It is admirably structured: vast and atmospheric, yet unified and fast-paced, like the very best Victorian adventure novels. While no one would claim that it is High Literature, it is a yarn worthy of sitting on the same shelf with H. Rider Haggard's *She*, Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories, and *Treasure Island*.

David Skal's admirable *Hollywood Gothic: The Tangled Web of 'Dracula' from Novel to Stage to Screen* explains how most adaptations of *Dracula* derive from the 1925 play by Hamilton Deane. It was a bad play which was filled with ludicrous dialogue and sacrificed the novel's powerful opening and climax to both the limitations of the stage and the conventions of the time. Theatergoers in those days expected elaborate, massive sets, which took a long time to build and couldn't be switched around easily. It's no coincidence that one of the standard genres of the time was the "drawing room play," the entire action of which took place in one room.

*Dracula* became a drawing-room mystery. It was trashed by the critics but enormously popular with the public, enlivened by magic-show effects, even a

trick corpse that crumbled into dust at the end. One gimmick provided an essential element of the subsequent *Dracula* iconography: the Count wore a black cape with a rigid, upturned collar. The collar served to hide the actor's head when, in darkness, he turned his back to the audience and dropped down a trapdoor, seeming to vanish into thin air. Most *Draculas* have sported that cape and collar ever since.

It is with the Deane play that the most important departure from Bram Stoker's novel begins to appear—the character of the Count himself. Someone who has only seen the movies and then reads the novel for the first time is in for a shock: Stoker's *Dracula* is not a doomed romantic lover. He is *vile*, a creature evoking disgust. He tries to be polite to Jonathan Harker at first, but the patina of his humanity proves very thin indeed. He is first seen as a very old man, dressed all in black, with a shock of white hair and a beard (reduced to a drooping moustache when he reaches London). His lips are unusually red, and his teeth—all of them—are noticeably sharp, though he does most of his work with the canines, leaving the characteristic twin bite marks of the movie vampire.

*Dracula's* breath is foul. His eyes seem to glow at a distance, as when he is spied at sunset atop the cliffs at Whitby. As he drinks blood, he grows younger. Toward the end of the book, much harassed by his pursuers, he begins to age again.

In Chapter 2 he actually speaks the line that Bela Lugosi made so famous, "Listen to them—the children of the night!" Then quickly, unlike Lugosi, he reassures the disconcerted Harker by adding, "Ah, sir, you dwellers in the city cannot enter into the feelings of the hunter."



*Though it seldom lived up to the promise of its title, Bram Stoker's Dracula gave us, as in the novel, a vampire with a singular talent for shape-shifting.*



*Nosferatu*, a 1922 German silent (above), featured Max Schreck as a repulsive rat-faced vampire. This unauthorized adaptation followed the novel closely, but altered the name of the count to avoid a lawsuit from Stoker's widow. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** *Dracula* (Gary Oldman) commands Lucy from the window in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

When driving the three vampire women away from Harker, he also has this exchange, from which later scriptwriters have derived possibly too much:

"You yourself never loved; you never love!" On this the other women joined, and such a mirthless, hard, soulless laughter rang through the room as almost made me faint to hear.... Then the Count turned, after looking at my face attentively, and said in a soft whisper:—

"Yes, I too can love; you yourselves can tell it from the past. Is it not so? Well, now I promise you that when I am done with him you shall kiss him at your will."

As for what this strange statement really means, my own guess is that the Count, who Stoker depicts as a monster, intends to show those ladies, and the reader, just what he means by love: the brutal destruction and degradation of the innocent Lucy.

But a wholly diabolic, physically repulsive *Dracula* would not work on stage (at least not in the imagination of Hamilton Deane) within the conventions of a drawing-room mystery. The Count had to be made presentable, so that the title character could be on stage more of the time. Thus, with the play, the first step had been taken from Stoker's hideous monstrosity to the matinee-idol characterizations of Frank Langella and Gary Oldman.

Ironically, the unauthorized 1922 German silent-film version, Murnau's *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (A Symphony of Horror), which Stoker's widow tried to suppress, features a "Dracula" even more ghastly than the original. Max Schreck, as "Count Orlock," resembles an enormous, half-human rat. Orlock is also totally allergic to sunlight, and is the first of many cinematic vampires to be destroyed by staying up past his bedtime.

Judging the Deane version to be too crude for

American audiences, Horace Liveright, who acquired the American stage rights, called in John L. Balderston, one of the most prominent stage and film writers of the time. (He also scripted or coscripted many of the Universal horror classics of the '30s, including *Mad Love* and *The Mummy*.) The Balderston/Deane "collaboration" became the basis for the 1931 film with Bela Lugosi, who had also played the role many times on stage.

While the opening 15 minutes or so of the film are a very faithful, very capably-mounted adaptation of the Stoker material, the rest of it is far removed from the original. Again, it is the character of the Count that changes the most. He is suave and sophisticated enough to be invited to high society parties, even if he has to hypnotize the occasional flunky to gain admittance. Dr. Van Helsing must solve the "mystery" of who among those present is the vampire preying on Miss Lucy. Only a mirror determines that the charming, exotic Count is the culprit. Otherwise, Lugosi's *Dracula* seems entirely human, which Stoker's character never did for more than a few minutes.

In the 1931 film, the characters of Jonathan Harker and Renfield have become fused. It is *Renfield* who travels to Transylvania to help the Count with his real estate dealings. He goes mad as a result of his experiences and is discovered on the derelict Russian ship at Whitby, hopelessly insane.

That's not Stoker, but it's an understandable change. As we examine all the stage and film adaptations of *Dracula*, we find changes in two areas: the Count's character, as noted, and in the scope and cast of the rest of the book. Certainly *Dracula*, with its four heroic stalwarts, vast geographic scale, and rapid changes of scene (not to mention the train, boat, and horseback chase back to Transylvania), wasn't going

to work as a drawing-room mystery stage play, or in a 90-minute film. There is an inevitable need to condense and contract. Characters become fused or eliminated altogether. As for the setting, the 1931 film adopts the strategy of keeping it in London. (The 1958 Hammer film *Horror of Dracula*, the first starring Christopher Lee, keeps it all in Eastern Europe, often at the expense of geography and logic.)

But there was no actual need to have most of the action take place in London. The 1931 film was needlessly dependent on the stage play. Then, as now, a trip across Europe might be cheaply depicted with a rapid succession of stock shots of ships and trains, and a line moving across a map. Indeed, the film's opening *does* take us to Transylvania, to the very elaborate Castle Dracula set, and the Count's journey to England is shown in the expected manner, with a stormy sea and a (not very convincing) model ship. The ending could just as readily have taken place in Castle Dracula as in Carfax Abbey.

The 1931 film also had censorship problems. No disintegrating corpses this time. Bela Lugosi is staked entirely offstage, and all we hear is a grunt. And we never actually see him bite anybody. There is not a drop of blood in the whole film, save when Renfield/Harker cuts himself shaving during his initial visit to the Castle. (This is a scene out of the novel, reproduced faithfully in virtually all later adaptations.)

After 1931, the changes came thick and fast. Lugosi never quite got to play the role again, though he reprised it in all but name in *The Mark of the Vampire* (1935) and once more in *The Return of the Vampire* (1943). *The Mark of the Vampire* was an adaptation of the 1927 silent, *London After Midnight*, the producers of which, afraid of legal trouble with the litigious Mrs. Stoker, changed the ending so that the "vampires" all prove to be impostors involved in a contrived plot. By 1935, no one had bothered to fix the ending, so it's a tremendous comedown. *The Return of the Vampire* made interesting use of the London Blitz as a background but is otherwise inconsequential and seldom shown today.

Nevertheless, it was Lugosi's Dracula, not Stoker's, who was imprinted on the public consciousness. Dracula in his cape, with his charming manners, had become as instantly recognizable as Tarzan in his loincloth (particularly Johnny Weissmuller's characterization, which is quite different from Edgar Rice Burroughs') or Robin Hood in his Lincoln green.

The adaptations of the 1940s continued negligibly, though it must be admitted that John Carradine at least looked the part in two of the later Universal "monster rally" mishmashes, *House of Frankenstein* (1944) and *House of Dracula* (1945), both of which strove to feature as many of the stock Universal-trademarked monsters as possible. Drawing a discreet shroud over a number of minor works on screen and television (including Bela Lugosi's humiliation in the 1948 *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*), we find the next meaningful adaptation occurring in the 1958 Hammer film *Horror of Dracula* (entitled simply *Dracula* in Britain). This is the film that made international stars out of Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing. It is a classic in its own right, and manages, largely, to break free of the encumbrances of the Hamilton Deane play. In many ways, it remains the best *Dracula* to date.

A close rewatching, now possible in this VCR era, reveals strengths and flaws. The script is often weak;



**F**OR THE WOMEN HE ATTACKS LATER ON IN THE BOOK, LUCY AND MINA, HE IS SOMETHING OUT OF A NIGHTMARE WORSE THAN ANYTHING THEY HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN ABLE TO IMAGINE.

the production values are cheesy. Editing is poor, to the point that the staked corpses sometimes can be seen to breathe. For all that the Count doesn't have a staff of servants and must even carry Jonathan Harker's luggage himself, Castle Dracula, with its curiously Italian architecture, is always spotless and well-lit. (Stoker, more plausibly, describes the castle as a ruin, which is how it is presented in that superbly atmospheric, cobwebby introductory scene in the Lugosi version.) But Terence Fisher's direction is wonderfully fluid, and the performances of Lee as Dracula and Cushing as Van Helsing are superb. They do Bram Stoker proud.

Once more, the plot, cast, and geographic scale have been condensed. It is indeed Jonathan Harker who first visits the Castle, but this time he is sent by Van Helsing (whom he did not originally know in the book; Van Helsing was Dr. Seward's old mentor) as an assassin, to kill Dracula. His "cover" is that he is

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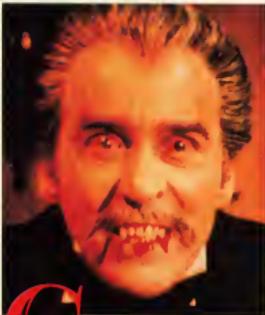
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**C**HRISTOPHER LEE—WHO SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT HE HAD NEVER SEEN THE LUGOSI FILM BEFORE—ACTING THE ROLE—DOES NOT PLAY DRACULA AS A SUAVE PARTY-GOER. HE IS STOKER'S MONSTER...

the new librarian. Why Dracula should suddenly require a librarian or fall for this ruse is never clear. (In the novel, he does need a real estate agent and someone to help him with his English.) The three vampire women have been reduced to one, a lady who runs around in her slip with much cleavage visible. She begs for Jonathan's help, but also tries to bite him.

The Count promptly puts a stop to the lady's attempts—and to the lady. He is seen frothing blood and carrying her off through a secret door in the library—all this within the first 10 minutes of running time; this film is, if nothing else, fast-paced. Of course, by this time, it was no longer possible to keep the audience in suspense about the mystery of Dracula's nature; they had seen Dracula on the screen for decades. So screenwriter Jimmy Sangster took a nod from Stoker, established the basics fast, and got on with the plot.

That's about the last we see of Harker. He proves a most incompetent vampire hunter in an admittedly chilling scene wherein he descends into the crypt, drives a stake through the vampire-lady, then turns to the Count's coffin only to find him gone. Harker, having been bitten by Dracula (or someone) the previous night, has slept through the day and

it is now sundown. He is sure he can't survive another night and so does what must be done, regardless of the risk. Alas, the trained vampire hunter hadn't thought to bring along a crucifix, garlic, or anything else to protect himself.

Later, Van Helsing visits the castle by daylight and is nearly run over by a hearse galloping out the front gate. The hearse carries a coffin, which contains Drac-

ula. Van Helsing finds Harker, now a vampire, in the crypt, and stakes him. Dracula then attacks Lucy, who dies, rises again, and is destroyed; and then he sets in on Mina.

But none of this happens in England. For some reason all these English people are living in Eastern Europe. The geography of the film is extremely fuzzy. Much of the action takes place in Klausenberg (the German name for the Romanian town of Cluj), which is in Transylvania and not completely inappropriate. But all the "natives" seem Bavarian rather than Slavic or Latin. They speak pidgin-German, often with Cockney accents. Dracula's coffin is stored at an undertaking establishment in Friedrichstrasse.

The thrilling climax of *Horror of Dracula* updates not Stoker's novel but *Nosferatu*. After a carriage chase and a wrestling match with Van Helsing, the Count is destroyed by sunlight, crumbling away into dust. All in all, this film isn't great art, but it is grand entertainment.

What this film does so splendidly is restore the *evil* of Count Dracula and convey his uncanny power, even despite a near-crippling lack of a special-effects budget. (This Dracula cannot turn into fog or a wolf or a bat—a "common misconception," Van Helsing assures Holmwood.) Christopher Lee—who said in an interview that he had never seen the Lugosi film before acting the role—does not play Dracula as a suave party-goer. He is Stoker's monster, clean-shaven admittedly, without any trace of Lugosi's accent (then again, after his first scene, he has no dialogue), yet purely predatory, and often very physically violent, capable of an almost animalistic frenzy. He hauls Jonathan Harker across a room; he hauls Mina off as if she were a child. And he has a menacing glare that Stoker would have appreciated.

This film also makes use of a handy plot device that Stoker didn't think of, but which tends to show up in later versions, particularly the romantic ones. Dracula, while still playing the polite host, admires a picture of Harker's fiancée (Lucy, this time; Mina is here the wife of Arthur Holmwood and Lucy's sister-in-law). He becomes fixated and deliberately seeks her out. In Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, it's Mina's picture (she being, as in the novel, Harker's intended), and he seeks her out.

Christopher Lee, fearing for his career, refused to don the cape for several years afterward. Ultimately numerous Hammer sequels followed, each one resurrecting and destroying the Count in a more ridiculous manner than the last. But these are not based on Stoker.

Lee also starred in the multinational 1970 rendition, *Count Dracula*, directed by Jesus Franco. This film is noteworthy for an attempt to present the Count as close to the Stoker original as possible (bearded, growing younger), but as drama it is a flat failure, often incoherent. Klaus Kinski makes a fine Renfield but has too many scenes to no particular purpose.

The next genuine Dracula was Jack Palance, in the 1973 telemovie called, simply, *Dracula*, scripted by Richard Matheson. Here, for the first time, an attempt is made to link Count Dracula with Vlad Tepes, the



Impaler of 15th-century Wallachia. Stoker's text supports this, but makes little of it. (Dracula tells Harker vivid stories of battles long ago, allegedly the deeds of his ancestors.) But the characterization in this version is not particularly memorable, and that the Count dies impaled to a table with a spear only hints at the liberties taken with the material.

In 1978 the BBC did a far better job with a miniseries, which tried very hard to be faithful to the text and went out of its way to film scenes no one ever had before. For the first time on screen we see Lucy and Mina vacationing at Whitby, sitting in the graveyard, conversing with the Old Salt, who tells them some of the sinister legends of the place. The chase back to Castle Dracula is faithfully recounted. Van Helsing and Mina ward off the three vampire women in the forest where they've camped, and Van Helsing has created a protective circle of crumbs of the Host. For the first time we see the vampire as Stoker described him, clambering down the wall of castle *head downward*. (The effect looks silly on camera. His cloak must have been pinned to his ankles, lest it fall down over his head.)

Louis Jourdan's Count is far from Stoker, but effective in its own right and very popular with female viewers—not a repulsive rapist/monster, but a seducer, a decayed, romantic beauty. As in virtually all previous versions, he has more onstage time in the film than he does in the novel, which only makes commercial sense. As the Hammer films proved, people go to Dracula films to see Dracula.

The stage was then set for the 1979 Frank Langella version, based on a Broadway revival of the Script That Wouldn't Die, the Deane/Balderston play. (The Broadway version was campy, with sets by Edward Gorey.) Here we are almost as far from Stoker's origi-

nal creation as it is possible to get, as if Rudolph Valentino has somehow usurped Bela Lugosi's role. Langella is so romantic that the ladies (on screen, and perhaps even in the audience) virtually swoon when he makes an appearance. He is a tragic figure, or tries to be, but the film slides into soap-opera absurdity so often that one is almost ready (and cringing) for him to break out into crooning song. (Be thankful for small favors; he doesn't.)

This film even managed to waste the talents of Sir Laurence Olivier, who plays Van Helsing. As horror it must be considered a total failure since it fails to frighten. But as romance, more akin to *Dark Shadows* than anything by Bram Stoker, it had considerable impact. The Langella image and the romantic vampire novels of Anne Rice surely played a far greater role in the genesis of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* than did Bram Stoker.

Despite all the hype, the Coppola film is not Stoker at all, and it is barely Dracula. Certainly it intersects Stoker's storyline at many points—the scenes with Renfield, the chase back to Transylvania, etc.—but the whole spirit of the original is gone. Coppola, in tossing out the accumulated baggage of a full 70 years of Dracula films, also threw out Bram Stoker's character.

When Jonathan Harker (Keanu Reeves) first encounters the old Count in Castle Dracula, he meets a shriveled, almost androgynous figure dressed in bright, fantastic clothing and sporting an elaborate coiffure and an ankle-length braid. Dracula (Gary Oldman) looks like a demented version of some Renaissance portrait of a Venetian doge. Admittedly, the crawling-down-the-wall scene is done very well, with the Count scrambling like a large, bright red rat.

But once Dracula is in London, he is established as

*Bela Lugosi, trained at the Hungarian State Theatre in Budapest, brought a mesmerizing glamour to the role of Dracula, both on the Broadway stage and in the 1931 Tod Browning film (above). OPPOSITE PAGE: Starting with 1958's Horror of Dracula, Christopher Lee has become our era's most proficient vampire—despite an initial reluctance to typecast. The 1970 Count Dracula (below) remained faithful to the novel, but failed as drama.*

*Continued on page 72*

if he had made it. It was his idea, and what amazed me was the amount of Spielberg-type stuff you could include and turn on its ear. The original notion was very gruesome: the gremlins ate the dog and killed the mother and cut her head off. Gross. Steven had wanted to make a low-budget horror picture, which is obviously why he called me. But as we started to develop it, we discovered that it was going to be so expensive to do the effects that we would have to make it a studio picture. But the studio [Warners] didn't know what to do with it; to their everlasting discredit, they never did like the picture very much and didn't like it at all until they went to the preview. They kept saying we ought to cut the gremlins out. "We like the small town; it's nice.... This *Leave It To Beaver* stuff; it's cute. But these *Gremlins*. They kill everybody; they're so unpleasant. Have to come out." But Steven backed me and let me make that picture into what it is, despite a lot of pressure not to. After that, he and I realized we could get along together just fine.

When I made *Explorers* I didn't have Steven or anyone to go to except this committee. All they cared about was that they wanted this movie on a certain date, and they didn't care what was in it or what wasn't in it or anything. They'd made a gamble: they had this big date to meet, and they were going to meet it, by God. More to the point, I was going to meet it, or else they were going to take me off the picture and put it out even earlier. It was very unpleasant.

I was astonished that *Gremlins* was successful. I thought it would be okay for horror fans, but I had no idea it was going to be an across-the-board hit. *Innerspace*, on the other hand, is a conventional picture at heart. The trick there was to try to make it as offbeat as possible, and I was surprised at how many people glossed over everything weird and treated it like some kind of Doris Day movie.

**McDONAGH:** You swore for years that you'd never make the sequel to *Gremlins*. What changed your mind?

**DANTE:** I will never live down the fact that I said I'd never do it, but I swear I meant it; I didn't want to make *Gremlins 2*. It wasn't a joke. I really didn't want to do it, especially since they wanted me to make a sequel immediately after the first one, when I never wanted to see another gremlin again for as long as I lived. I really don't like the idea of doing remakes and sequels; when I did *Twilight Zone—The Movie*, I argued against remaking old episodes, but they were determined, so I picked the one I thought was going to be the most remarkable without having to imitate the one that had been done before.

But they kept pressing on the *Gremlins* sequel, and I said, "No, why don't you just go off and do it yourselves?" So they hired

writers, and they worked with directors, and for several years they tried out various concepts, none of which worked. Finally, years later, they came to me and said they really couldn't figure out what to make and begrudgingly admitted that maybe I had had something to do with the first one, that Steven hadn't done it all himself. I said that the only way I'd consider it was if they'd let me do whatever I wanted, and they said "Fine." Nobody had ever said to me before: *You can do whatever you want.*

After I made the picture, I discovered they weren't really that serious about that "do whatever you want" business, because they really disliked the picture almost as much as they had disliked the original. Which I would have thought would have made the whole thing go better. After all, they *hated* the first one and it made a ton of

They kept saying, "We like the small town; it's nice... it's cute. But these Gremlins. They kill everybody; they're so unpleasant. Have to come out."

money. Then they proceeded to open *Gremlins 2* against *Dick Tracy* in what I perceive as a cynical attempt to keep *Dick Tracy* from making as much money as *Batman*. I have it on pretty good authority that that was the intention. So I was pretty disgusted, especially after what had happened with *Innerspace*, which was another picture I thought should have been a hit that they managed to turn into a disaster. So Warner Brothers and I parted company.

**McDONAGH:** A lot of reviewers felt *Gremlins 2* was actually better than *Gremlins*.

**DANTE:** I think it's better. In fact, it was one of my happiest experiences, in terms of a picture turning out the way I had wanted it to. So it was very disheartening, especially after all the good reviews, to have it not make enough money. It did cost too much, but then, everything does. And it made a lot of money overseas, so it actually was successful for Warners, if not successful enough for me to get any more money. I mean, *Gremlins* was such a cheap movie. We did all that stuff for \$11 million, and when it

made \$200 million I guess they couldn't think of enough ways to hide all the money, so they had to tell me I was going to get more. That's what happened to [producer] Jon Davison on *Airplane!*; they called up and said, "Well, there's no way to hide it—you better call your accountant." (Laughs) The people who made *Alien* didn't see any money for years and years and years. The producers of *Batman* didn't make any money. You just have to send an accountant in. Depressing, but true.

**McDONAGH:** That's why so many filmmakers on the low end of the spectrum wind up forming their own production and distribution companies. Otherwise, they never see a penny.

**DANTE:** People shouldn't go into this business thinking they're going to make a lot of money, because to really strike it rich you have to be part of a fluke like *Gremlins*, that happened to be the right movie at the right time during the right summer. That same movie might not have made money the year before or the year after or even a couple of months later that summer. *Gremlins* became a hit all out of proportion to its quality as a movie, and you're lucky if you have one of those in your life.

**McDONAGH:** *Matinee* is actually rather sad. It's a love letter to a type of filmmaking that doesn't exist anymore.

**DANTE:** There's no doubt about it. It's a nice little movie, very personal to me. The kid is sort of the way I was at that age, going to the kind of movies I went to see, reading the kind of magazines I used to read. It doesn't seem like that long ago to me, 1962, but I guess to kids today it's like ancient history. That kind of moviegoing is utterly gone. You could send a child to the movies and know that what he'd be seeing would be okay, not have any bad stuff in it. The whole experience was different. I don't think there's a theater left in the country that has real kids' matinees on a regular basis. It does make me sad, because it was having that kind of childhood that set me on the path to wanting to make movies.

**McDONAGH:** Do you see anyone among the directors working in exploitation now who reminds you of yourself?

**DANTE:** I probably don't have a clear enough sense of what my own movies are like to talk stylistically, but I read interviews with guys like Quentin Tarantino, and I'm impressed by—and I guess identify with—how much he just seems to love and know about movies. I really like the idea of people coming up who want to make movies because they love movies. That was my inspiration; I wanted to make movies like the movies I wanted to go see. □

Excerpted from *Filming on the Fringe* by Maitland McDonagh. Copyright © 1994 by Maitland McDonagh. To be published Fall 1994 by Citadel Press/Carol Publishing Group.

# THE MASK

Continued from page 41

"ILM was extremely enthusiastic about the project because they had something to prove on this movie too—you can do these kinds of films without a world-class star that costs 12 million and a budget that's 67 million dollars," notes Russell. "After *Jurassic Park* they wanted people to know that it isn't the element of Industrial Light and Magic that requires a film to be 60 or 70 million dollars."

Initially breaking into the business as a screenwriter, Russell made the transition to director back in 1985 with *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: The Dream Warriors*, when New Line told him that if he could write a good enough script, he could also direct the project. Hoping up in a cabin for 10 days with friend and fellow screenwriter Frank Darabont, they ultimately dreamed up the perfect evolution for Freddy's character.

"The first film was brilliant and absolutely frightening and I didn't think we could possibly make anything scarier," recalls Russell. "So my idea was rather than have Freddy appear to you in your bedroom in whatever creepy way, instead to literally go into the characters' dreams in different dream worlds. That way you have new visual potential for the series."

Following the critical and box office success of *The Dream Warriors*, Russell then moved on to direct the 1988 remake of *The Blob*. While the director is not completely satisfied with the results, he's still pleased with what they were able to achieve with the resources they had. "There were things I would have liked to have done but wasn't able to do because of the budget," he notes. "I'm not sour grapes about it though. It was what it was supposed to be."

Since then, Russell had been languishing in aborted development deals for big-budget science fiction-fantasy films. His adaptation for *Neuromancer* ate up a large chunk of his time, and even though he was offered other films in the interim, he didn't want to accept material that he didn't feel he could bring something special to, until of course *The Mask* fell his way.

"I'm not interested in doing science fiction or fantasy if I can't do something that will excite me or the audience," concludes Russell. "The economy and a lot of budget restrictions seem to me why a lot of genre films aren't very daring. Even *The Mask* was originally conceived on a much lower budget and was less ambitious. I totally got New Line more and more excited until finally they took a risk in making it a much bigger project than they ever have in the past, and I think they're very happy with the progress. I think we're also going to knock genre fans on their ass. They're going to get a big eyeful and ultimately they'll be the ones to decide if they work or not, as they always do, at the end of the day." □

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**Welcome to the world of Anime.**

Beginning Monday, May 23, the Sci-Fi Channel will present Premiere Japanese Animation Week, a special festival that transports viewers to the Land of the Rising Sun, home of some of today's most innovative and imaginative filmmakers.

*Dominion: Tank Police, Parts I and II*, showcase the action-packed tales of Tank Police officer Leona as she fights the forces of futuristic terrorism. Part I airs Monday, May 23, at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. EST. Part II airs Tuesday, May 24, at the same times.

The Spacecraft Starlight deciphers the birthplace of humanity in *Oáin: Photon Space Sailor Starlight*, airing Wednesday, May 25, at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. EST.

A teenager with superhuman powers is put to the test in *Project A-ko*, which airs



The Day the World Ended airs Monday, June 20, during Roger Corman Week.

Thursday, May 26, at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. EST. The darkest forces of evil thrive on the colonized planet of Venus in *The Venus Wars*. It airs Friday, May 27, at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. EST.

This marks the third time the Sci-Fi Channel has brought the bizarre world of Japanese animation to the living rooms of America.

**If it's June it must be Roger Corman Week.**

The celebrated master of the B-movie — and the producer who helped launch the filmmaking careers of talents such as Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Monte Hellman, Jonathan Demme, Peter Bogdanovich, Robert Towne, and Joe Dante (see page 42), as well as actors such as Robert De Niro, William Shatner, Jack Nicholson, Bruce

Dern, Peter Fonda, Talia Shire, and Ellen Burstyn — will be honored in June with a week of his most popular films.

Monday, June 20, is *The Day the World Ended*. Tuesday, June 21, is the *Day of The Unkaid*. Wednesday, June 22, is your chance to meet the *Teenage Careman*. Thursday, June 23, enjoy the *Saga of the Viking Women*. And Friday, June 24, you'll learn how *It Conquered the World*.

Check out these genre favorites, and you'll understand why Peter Fonda has said, "If you want to learn how to direct, then the man you work for is Roger"—and why David Carradine concludes simply, "Roger Corman is a genius."

**David and Jennifer Lynch go to work for the Sci-Fi Channel.**

Talented young filmmaker Jennifer Lynch, in creative collaboration with her father, director David Lynch (*Twin Peaks, Dune*), has directed the Sci-Fi Channel's newest network advertising campaign, currently airing on the Channel.

Her previous directing credits include the feature film *Boxing Helena*.

Jennifer Lynch's TV spots are rooted in the science fiction and horror genres. She has included live-action special effects with digital compositing of film images featuring such familiar figures as Dracula, the Incredible Hulk, and the alien from the Sci-Fi Channel Planetary Premiere, *Official Denial*. □

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# MAY • JUNE PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

## DAYTIME

TIME	MONDAY - FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6:00	Cartoon Quest	Informational	Informational
6:30			
7:00		Cartoon Quest	
7:30			
8:00			<b>Science Show</b>
8:30			<b>Inside Space</b>
9:00	Lost in Space		<b>Mysteries</b>
9:30			<b>Sci-Fi Buzz</b>
10:00	The Incredible Hulk		My Secret Identity
10:30			My Secret Identity
11:00	Dark Shadows	Swamp Thing	Misfits of Science
11:30	Dark Shadows	Swamp Thing	
Noon	Beauty and the Beast	The Powers of Matthew Star	The Voyagers
12:30			
1:00	The Bionic Woman	Space 1999	Time Tunnel
1:30			
2:00	The Hitchhiker	Moonlight Matinee	UFO
2:30	Beyond Reality		
3:00	Land of the Giants		Moonlight Matinee
3:30			
4:00	Lost in Space	Radiation Theater	
4:30			
5:00	The Incredible Hulk		Radiation Theater
5:30			
6:00	Beauty and the Beast	Starman	
6:30			

## EVENING

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00	Ray Bradbury	Alien Nation	Amazing Stories				
7:30	Hitchcock Pre.		Amazing Stories				
8:00	Battlestar Gal. or	Sci-Fi Feature	The Incredible				
8:30	Buck Rogers	Film	Hulk				
9:00	SF Series/Movie*		<b>Sci-Fi Buzz</b>				
9:30							<b>Mysteries</b>
10:00	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Friday the 13th	<b>Inside Space</b>
10:30						The Series	<b>Science Show</b>

## LATE NIGHT

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
11:00	Ray Bradbury	Alien Nation	Amazing Stories				
11:30	Hitchcock Pre.		Amazing Stories				
Midnite	Battlestar Gal. or	Sci-Fi Feature	The Incredible				
12:30	Buck Rogers	Film	Hulk				
1:00	SF Series/Movie*		<b>Sci-Fi Buzz</b>				
1:30							<b>Mysteries</b>
2:00	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Quan.Leap/Movie*	Friday the 13th	<b>Inside Space</b>
2:30						The Series	<b>Science Show</b>

All programming shown Eastern Standard Time. Please adapt for your local time zone.

\*Sci-Fi Movie airs one week per month. Titles in red denotes original programming. All programming subject to change.

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## MAY MOVIES ON THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

### SUNDAY, 5/1

- 9:00 am **Corridors of Blood**  
1958, Horror, Boris Karloff  
11:00 am **The Haunted Stranger**  
1958, Suspense, Boris Karloff  
1:00 pm **The Invisible Ray**  
1936, Horror, Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi  
3:00 pm **Targets**  
1968, Suspense, Boris Karloff  
5:00 pm **Frankenstein**  
1931, Classic, Boris Karloff, Colin Clive

### FRIDAY, 5/7

- 12:00 pm **Godzilla on Monster Island**  
Creature Feature  
2:00 pm **Godzilla vs. Megalon** Creature Feature  
4:00 pm **Godzilla vs. the Cosmic Monster** Creature Feature  
8:00 pm **Alien Nation**  
1988, Science Fiction, James Caan, Mandy Patinkin  
12:00 am **Alien Nation**  
1988, Science Fiction, James Caan, Mandy Patinkin  
3:00 am **Legend of the Dinosaurs 1983**, Creature Feature, Tsunehiko Watase

### SUNDAY, 5/8

- 3:00 pm **Child of Darkness, Child of Light** 1991, Occult, Anthony Denison  
5:00 pm **Omen III: The Final Conflict**  
1981, Occult, Sam Neill

### FRIDAY, 5/14

- 12:00 pm **Fugitive Alien**  
1986, Science Fiction, Tatsuya Azuma  
2:00 pm **Star Force**  
1986, Science Fiction, Tatsuya Azuma  
4:00 pm **Plague**  
1978, Science Fiction, Daniel Pilon  
7:00 pm **Dune**  
1984, Science Fiction, Kyle MacLachlan  
11:00 pm **Dune**  
1984, Science Fiction, Kyle MacLachlan  
3:00 am **Plague**  
1978, Science Fiction, Daniel Pilon

### SUNDAY, 5/15

- 3:00 pm **Dune**  
1984, Science Fiction, Kyle MacLachlan  
5:00 pm **Title TBA**



Boris Karloff stars in *The Corridors of Blood*, part of the Boris Karloff Fest on Monday, May 1, 9:00 am.

### FRIDAY, 5/27

- 9:00 pm **The Venus Wars**  
Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **The Venus Wars**  
Japanese Animated

### FRIDAY, 5/28

- 12:00 pm **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy—PTS 1 & 2** 1982, Science Fiction, Simon Jones  
1:30 pm **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy—PTS 3 & 4** 1982, Science Fiction, Simon Jones  
3:00 pm **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy—PTS 5 & 6** 1982, Science Fiction, Simon Jones  
4:30 pm **Killdozer**  
1974, Science Fiction, Clint Walker  
8:00 pm **Omen III: The Final Conflict**  
1981 Occult, Sam Neill  
12:00 am **Omen III: The Final Conflict**  
1981, Occult, Sam Neill  
3:00 am **Killdozer**  
1974, Science Fiction, Clint Walker

### SUNDAY, 5/29

- 3:00 pm **The Car**  
1977, Horror, James Brodin  
5:00 pm **Transformations**  
Science Fiction

### MONDAY, 5/30

- 9:00 am **Odin: Photon Space Sailor Starlight**

- Japanese Animated  
11:00 am **Project A-KO**  
Japanese Animated  
1:00 pm **The Venus Wars**  
Japanese Animated

- 3:00 pm **Dominion: Tank Police Part I** Japanese Animated

- 5:00 pm **Dominion: Tank Police Part II** Japanese Animated  
7:00 pm **Project A-KO**  
Japanese Animated

- 9:00 pm **The Venus Wars**  
Japanese Animated  
11:00 pm **Dominion: Tank Police Part I**

- Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **Dominion: Tank Police Part II**  
Japanese Animated

### FRIDAY, 5/21

- 12:00 pm **The Other**  
1972, Horror, Uta Hagen  
2:00 pm **World of Dracula**  
1979, Horror, Michael Nouri  
4:00 pm **This Island Earth**  
1954, Science Fiction, Rex Reason  
8:00 pm **Syngenor**  
1990, Horror, Starr Andreef  
12:00 am **Syngenor**  
1990, Horror, Starr Andreef  
3:00 am **World of Dracula**  
1979, Horror, Michael Nouri

### SUNDAY, 5/22

- 3:00 pm **The Dark Secret of Harvest Home—PTS 1 & 2**  
1978, Horror, David Ackroyd

### MONDAY, 5/23

- 9:00 pm **Dominion: Tank Police Part I** Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **Dominion: Tank Police Part I** Japanese Animated

### TUESDAY, 5/24

- 9:00 am **Dominion: Tank Police Part II**  
Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **Dominion: Tank Police Part II**  
Japanese Animated

### WEDNESDAY, 5/25

- 9:00 pm **Odin: Photon Space Sailor Starlight**  
Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **Odin: Photon Space Sailor Starlight**  
Japanese Animated

### THURSDAY, 5/26

- 9:00 pm **Project A-KO**  
Japanese Animated  
1:00 am **Project A-KO**  
Japanese Animated

# JUNE MOVIES

ON THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

## SATURDAY, 6/4

2:00 pm **Phantom Planet**  
1961, Science Fiction, Dean Fredericks

4:00 pm **Invasion of the Saucer Men**  
1957, Science Fiction, Steve Terrell

8:00 pm **Barbarella**  
1968 Science Fiction, Jane Fonda

12:00 pm **Barbarella**  
1968 Science Fiction, Jane Fonda

3:00 am **Mark of the Devil**  
1984, Supernatural, Dirk Benedict

## SUNDAY, 6/5

1:00 pm **Creation from the Black Lagoon**  
1954, Creature Feature, Richard Carlson

3:00 pm **Revenge of the Creature** 1955, Creature Feature, John Agar

5:00 pm **The Incredible Shrinking Man**  
1957, Science Fiction, Grant Williams

8:00 pm **Destination Inner Space** 1966, Creature Feature, Scott Brady

4:00 pm **Jaws II**  
1982, Suspense, Louis Gossett, Jr.

8:00 pm **Close Encounters of the Third Kind (Theat. Ver)** 1977, Science Fiction, Richard Dreyfuss, Teri Garr

12:00 am **Close Encounters of the Third Kind (Theat. Ver)** 1977, Science Fiction, Richard Dreyfuss, Teri Garr

3:30 am **In Possession** 1984, Supernatural, Carol Lynley



Jane Fonda stars as *Barbarella*, Saturday, June 4.

## SUNDAY, 6/12

3:00 pm **Close Encounters of the Third Kind (Directors Cut)** 1977, Science Fiction, Richard Dreyfuss, Teri Garr

2:00 pm **And The Wall Came Tumbling Down** 1984, Supernatural, Barbi Benton

3:30 pm **Look What's Happened to Rosemary's Baby** 1976, Occult, Ruth Gordon, Patty Duke Astin

8:00 pm **Deathwatch** 1982, Science Fiction, Romy Schneider, Harvey Keitel

12:00 am **Deathwatch** 1982, Science Fiction, Romy Schneider, Harvey Keitel

3:00 am **And The Wall Came Tumbling Down** 1984, Supernatural, Barbi Benton

## SUNDAY, 6/19

3:00 pm **Death Watch** 1980, Science Fiction, Romy Schneider, Harvey Keitel

5:30 pm **Conan the Barbarian** 1982, Fantasy, Arnold Schwarzenegger

## MONDAY, 6/20

9:00 pm **The Day the World Ended** 1956, Science Fiction,

Richard Denning  
1:00 am **The Day the World Ended** 1956, Science Fiction, Richard Denning

## TUESDAY, 6/21

9:00 pm **The Undead** 1956, Occult, Pamela Duncan  
1:00 am **The Undead** 1956, Occult, Pamela Duncan

## WEDNESDAY, 6/22

9:00 pm **Teenage Caveman** 1958, Fantasy, Robert Vaughn  
1:00 **Teenage Caveman** 1958, Fantasy, Robert Vaughn

## THURSDAY, 6/23

9:00 pm **Saga of the Viking Women...** 1957, Fantasy, Abby Dalton  
1:00 am **Saga of the Viking Women...** 1957, Fantasy, Abby Dalton

## FRIDAY, 6/24

9:00 am **It Conquered the World** 1956, Science Fiction, Peter Graves  
1:00 am **It Conquered the World** 1956, Science Fiction, Peter Graves

## SATURDAY, 6/25

2:00 pm **The Devils Daughter** 1972, Occult, Shelly Winters  
3:30 pm **The Possession of Joel Delaney** 1972, Supernatural, Shirley MacLaine

8:00 pm **Subspecies** 1991, Horror, Michael Watson  
12:00 am **Subspecies** 1991, Horror, Michael Watson

3:00 am **Child's Play** 1984, Supernatural, Mary Crosby

## SUNDAY, 6/26

3:00 pm **Running Against Time** 1990, Science Fiction, Robert Hayes

5:00 pm **Subspecies** 1991, Horror, Michael Watson

## F.T.L. NEWSFEED

**F**TL (Faster Than Light) *Newsfeed* is the Sci-Fi Channel's fictional news feature from 150 years in the future. A 60-second, daily, interstitial news update, it is one of the many information and entertainment services provided by Commlink, the total communications system of the year 2144. Transmitted from an orbiting space station, *F.T.L. Newsfeed* is set in a virtual reality

newsroom, providing information delivered by a virtual reporter. Stories span futuristic issues about tomorrow's population and politics. It covers a world very different from our own, but resonating with much that is familiar to us today.

*F.T.L. Newsfeed* airs Monday through Friday at 2:58 pm, 7:29 pm and 11:29 pm; Saturday at 3:59 pm, 5:59 pm; Sunday at 11:59 am, 12:59 pm 4:59 pm.

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## From Yoda to Count Yorga, here's a trio of titles for your reference library.

BY LAWRENCE TUCKER

**W**HEN *STAR WARS* OPENED IN 1977, I REMEMBER a friend excitedly telling me, "Remember the best parts of all the old science fiction movies you used to love? The space battles, the ray guns, the weird-looking aliens? Flash Gordon's rocket ship? Well, somebody's put 'em all together, and this movie's nothing but the best parts." ■ That somebody was of course George Lucas, who

is, to his credit, as much a brilliant recycler of beloved cultural artifacts as he is a creator; like *Willow*, *American Graffiti*, and the *Indiana Jones* movies, the *Star Wars* movies are essentially exercises in nostalgia. (The ingredients of *Willow* may be, in fact, a bit too familiar, a grab

icize, and in fact it offers relatively little text—which is probably just as well, since the films themselves aren't so terribly interesting to read about unless one is a dyed-in-the-wool technophile and enjoys reminiscences like this one (from an Industrial Light & Magic crew member):

"I remember sitting in the optical department, as boxes and boxes of film piled up, and not having any way to put it together because we were still waiting to complete the optical printer. I don't think we ever quite knew if we were going to make it or not."

With material like that to contend with, as well as the necessity of maintaining a positive tone (indeed, the text is generally as upbeat as a press release), one suspects that author Champlin, a veteran *L.A. Times* film writer, must have had a dull time writing this book.

I wonder whether I'm alone in finding a decline in Lucas's celebrated *Star Wars* trilogy as their creator grew richer, more critically acclaimed, and (understandably) more self-conscious. The films grew perceptibly more sentimental and perhaps a bit more pompous, what with the all-too-huggable Ewoks and the need to tie up loose ends with love triumphing over all. By *Return of the Jedi*, with Obi-Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader grinning amicably at one another as music surged, Lucas seemed all too acutely aware of his new role as Modern American Mythmaker, and perhaps he took this responsibility a bit too much to heart. (The same may be said of George Miller, who struck gold with *The Road Warrior*, the second in his *Mad Max* saga, then seemed to strain a bit too hard to work references to Joseph Campbell and James Barrie into *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*. When genre filmmakers, or even genre writers, are told that they're Artists, they sometimes begin to believe it and to behave accordingly—at the risk of losing their talents.)

Incidentally, if you need proof that George Lucas has Made It Big, just take a look at the photos of his Skywalker Ranch, where his production offices are located. It's a graceful Victorian-style mansion he designed himself ("I've always been a frustrated architect") on some 4700 acres in Nicasio, California. Lucas, we learn, chose every detail, right down to the doorknobs and light-switch panels. The ranch has a huge underground parking garage (to keep automobiles out of sight), a recording studio, and a 15,000-volume reference library beneath a gorgeous stained-glass dome; it employs a full-time staff of 35, including four librarians, an



Mixing traditions of myth with Hollywood swashbuckling, Val Kilmer takes on the evil Queen's henchmen in *George Lucas' Willow*.

bag of elements from other movies, sword-and-sorcery epics, fairy tales, myths, even a bit of Monty Python.)

Even *THX-1138*, based on the shorter film he made while a student at USC, recycles as much as it invents. Its oppressive Orwellian society of the future is complete with affectless citizens whose skulls are shaved and whose sexual feelings are forbidden (making, as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, any expression of love that much more dramatic).

In *George Lucas: The Creative Impulse* by Charles Champlin (207 pp, \$39.95, New York: Harry N. Abrams), a handsome coffee-table book tracing Lucas's career from "The Early Years" to the present, the producer/director comes across as something of a boy genius, intense but unassuming. (Lucas is becomingly modest, for example, about a flop like *Howard the Duck*, which he executive-produced.) Filled with beautiful photos, many of them in color, this is a volume designed to celebrate, not crit-

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Editor's note: *Sci-Fi Entertainment* welcomes your letters. Here's your chance to sound off about the Sci-Fi Channel, the individual films and TV shows it airs, the contents of this magazine, and any other aspect of the sci-fi/horror universe that you think we ought to hear about. Address all correspondence to the Editor, *Sci-Fi Entertainment*, 457 Carlisle Drive, Herndon, VA 22070. Letters may be edited for length.

In this issue, we present some of the letters and messages that Max Lansing, Sci-Fi Channel's online representative, has received via E-mail.

I was wondering whatever happened to the old *Ultraman* series. I have not seen it in at least 15 years. Is it still available? Also, will the Sci-Fi Channel be creating any new sci-fi series? I know that you do your own movies, which are excellent.

Alan Guggenheim

*The SFC is considering Ultraman. It's also planning on developing several dramatic series, though probably not till the end of 1994 or the beginning of 1995. —Max*

I just wanted to say that I love the Sci-Fi Channel, especially *Beauty and the Beast*. It's a great show, and I'm glad you're running it again. I enjoyed seeing Ron Perlman host the marathon. Maybe you can make that an annual Sci-Fi Channel Valentine's Day tradition.

John

In reply to the message about original programming on the SFC... May I humbly suggest the following: I believe that American TV networks could learn a few things from the BBC. I am convinced that the best format for adapting some of the great sci-fi or fantasy stories would not be a two-hour movie, but would be a miniseries similar to *I, Claudius*. Imagine a story like *Dune* told in that format. Plenty of time to develop characters and fill in background details. An hour a week for 17 weeks or as long as it takes to tell the story. This would also help to spread out the costs a bit. (You could also spread out the money you'd make on home video sales later.) And if you picked a particularly epic tale, like Arthur C. Clarke's *Rama* tales or Asimov's *Foundation*, you could keep the series going for years.

With the new film and video special effects available, certainly anything is possible visually. The trick will be making the characters interesting and believable. With the *I, Claudius* format, the audience can get wrapped up in the characters' lives the way people do with

their favorite soap operas. Just be sure you pick a project worthy of this treatment. One reason for the decline of the miniseries on the "Big Three" was that in many cases they were choosing material that didn't even merit a two-hour movie, much less a 12-hour epic. (Does the world really need another Danielle Steele movie?) Be particular! Do you have the guts to take on *Stranger in a Strange Land* or *Childhood's End* — or even *Lord of the Rings*? I honestly think they could be done.

Brian Hendrickson

I am a real fan of the Sci-Fi Channel, and it used to be unscrambled on my dish. Why the switch to scrambled?

Darlene Sweetman

*The SFC was free to dish owners for almost two years. Like any new channel, it eventually scrambles. Cable subscribers don't get SFC for free, they get it as part of a basic package. And so will you, if your TVRO program distributor, who you buy HBO, CNN, etc., from, offers it.*

*As of this writing, we are in the process of negotiating deals with TVRO packagers to include SFC as part of programming offered to satellite owners. SFC is committed to insuring an adequate number of TVRO program distributors are selling SFC, so that you will have a choice regarding who you deal with. —Max*

I just wanted to thank you for the great setup for the Saturday morning cartoons. I've just about taped all the cartoons, except for the 10-11 a.m. slot.

The best cartoons you've shown so far are *Planet of the Apes*, *Flash Gordon*, and *Lazer Tag Academy*. I'm also taping *Here Comes the Gramp*, *Little Shop*, and *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, because the cartoons are great; they were before my time, and I had never seen them before. I want to thank you, too, for returning *The Transformers*.

I hope in the future you can show cartoons such as *M.A.S.K.*, *Dink the Dinosaur*, and *Dungeons and Dragons*.

Luther Taylor III

We have one question: Are you going to show any more of the Gerry Anderson superanimation or the Anderson movies and series? Entire family loves them. Keep up the good shows.

Annette Guadagnin

*Strap on your hyperspace belt, because the SFC will begin airing Anderson's UFO at 2 p.m. on Sundays beginning April 3 (awesome show) and re-air Space: 1999 on May 7 at 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The SFC is looking to acquire more animation as well. —Max*

MARK HINTZ

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archivist, and "its own well-equipped fire brigade."

And if you need further proof of Lucas's clout, note that this book sports a foreword by Steven Spielberg and another one by Francis Ford Coppola.

**The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror**, by David J. Skal, 432 pp, \$25, New York: W. W. Norton (212) 354-5500.

Skal's book has been widely hailed in the genre magazines, and deservedly so. It's a highly intelligent, compulsively readable study of the classic horror films, with additional chapters on related entertainment such as EC Comics and Stephen King novels.

Ostensibly the book's subject is the "four primary icons" of horror's "dark carousel": Dracula, Frankenstein, "the werewolfish duality of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and human freaks. However, other icons with perhaps a shade less impressive pedigree are given too little attention. What about paranoia-inducing pod people? (I ask because *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* has just been remade for the second time. Skal has just a single reference to the first of these films.) What about space aliens as a source of modern horror? What about the various giant creatures, whether humans, apes, lizards, insects, or (in one instance, *Night of the Lepus*) even giant rabbits, that have long thrilled horror audiences? These worthies enter Skal's book as little more than an afterthought; in fact, they receive less coverage than TV-hosts Vampira and Zacherley.

Still, even Skal's excesses can make for fascinating reading; he's obviously done a prodigious amount of research, and he uses it to good advantage. Did you know that Bela Lugosi had a year-long affair with Clara Bow, and that "a nude portrait of her...would hang on Lugosi's living-room wall two marriages later"? (And did you know that the first of these marriages lasted just three days?)

Skal reveals that John Huston was one of the writers who contributed to a brief warning ("It may shock you. It may even horrify you..."), spoken by actor Edward Van Sloan, that served as a prologue to *Frankenstein* and as a sop to the censors. In fact, he documents the really amazing amount of censorship that horror films had to endure. "In *The Mystery of the Wax Museum*," he writes, "the New York censors cut the shot of a character lighting a piece of paper with a cigar in preparation to burn the museum for its insurance money, as if the audience needed protection from the knowledge of the various means by which a flame could be produced." Skal observes, I think correctly, that a lot of the brouhaha over Bret Easton Ellis's blood-drenched *American Psycho* occurred because "Simon and Schuster and Knopf were not genre publishers." In a paperback aimed at the usual horror buffs, Ellis's carnage would have been no big deal.

The book provides a detailed background on *Freaks*, including a description of "Spurs"

by Tod Robbins, the *conte cruel* on which it's based. It also points out that the filmed versions of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* have all, in fact, lifted elements—especially the romantic dalliance—from Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray*. Another plus is the selection of unusual photos, including Max Schreck of *Nosferatu* fame without his makeup; the facade of the notorious Grand Guignol Theater, in a rather charming Parisian cul-de-sac; Hamilton Deane, the British actor who adapted *Dracula* for the stage, playing Frankenstein's monster for British theater audiences; a teenage James Dean in Frankenstein makeup; and the ever-transforming face of Michael Jackson.

The most annoying of Skal's obsessions—indeed, the book's central thesis—is the attempt to link horror entertainment to modern-day warfare. By his lights, the postwar popularity of *Jekyll and Hyde* in Germany and America must have something to do with World War I: "The story of a man's—and by way of audience identification, a country's—descent into bestial violence had a clear metaphorical link to the conflagration just past." Still, even here, Skal offers riches; did you know that Hitler was a *King Kong* fan?

**The Vampire Film: From Nosferatu to Bram Stoker's Dracula**, by Alain Silver and James Ursini, 272 pp, \$20, New York: Limelight Editions (212) 532-5525.

Here's a book that's more for reference than for light reading. Silver and Ursini are not the writers Skal is, and this thorough, scholarly examination of cinematic blood-drinkers sometimes lapses into film-school prose, as in this description of Carl Dreyer's *Vampyr*, which the authors describe as "an ontology of terror which constricts and obscures material reality causing the viewer to puzzle over what traces of it do filter through. Characteristic of Dreyer as much as of the genre, the viewpoint is again that of the victim; for although an image like that of a skeletal hand poised to pour out the contents of a small vial may seem nothing more than an emblem of sensory delight—in having animated this bony thing or of intellectual delight in having the 'magic' to animate it, when put in the context of an overall visual idiom, the shot reacquires a 'sense' of its own."

What makes this book valuable is its hefty filmography of movies containing vampires—nearly 400 of them, from Abbott and Costello to trusty Count Yorga to a Hungarian/Italian production called *A Zsarnok Szive avagy Bocaccio Magyarorszagon*—and its provocative selection of black-and-white photos. The photos remind us, in case we'd forgotten, that the real attraction of vampire films is the opportunity they offer for off-beat sex in all its forms, from mildly kinky to downright lethal. □

Lawrence Tucker's reviews have appeared in *Newsday*, the *New York Daily News*, and *Washington Post Book World*.

## Infinite Channels

Continued from page 16

works of J.R.R. Tolkien and Jules Verne, when his brother, a computer programmer with an itch to quit his job at a bank, recruited him to render the graphics for a children's game, *The Manhole*. Upon that game's commercial success, more children's games followed, including an early CD-ROM product that is already regarded as a "classic" of Mac software, *Cosmic Osmo*.

But *Myst*, their first game for the adult market, has been hailed as a breakthrough. "It's the graphics that first pull you in," Robyn says. "We put in a lot of time and expense there. But even more than the graphics, it's the game play, which is not something that's been seen before. It's not your conventional dungeons-and-dragons scenario; it's not science fiction. It's really kind of hard to put your finger on just what it is."

In *Myst*, as in the children's games that preceded it, the Millers avoid tying the player to a linear plot; the theme that unites all their games is exploration. The exploration of *Myst Island*, where the game begins, leads you to other, hidden worlds—and exploring these worlds uncovers the secrets of Atrus, an ancient scribe, and of his sons Sirrus and Achenar.

Versions of *Myst* for DOS (Disk Operating System) and Windows will appear on shelves this spring; Robyn and Rand are now laying out the scenario for *Myst II* while they put the finishing touches on their collaborative novel, also named *Myst*. "The game took two years to develop, so we're giving ourselves two years for *Myst II*. The novel grew out of a 'prehistory' that we wrote to guide us through the development of the game, and will also give *Myst II* a consistency with the first one; there'll be things in the second game that are going to click with things in the first, things that, right now, people don't realize are connected to the story. The novel grew out of the prehistory."

At this writing, the Rands have yet to begin their search for the right publisher, but with a large crowd of *Myst* addicts to support them, there's little doubt that the book will be snapped up by a computer-savvy outfit. The natural next question is: Will there be a *Myst III*?

Robyn laughs; obviously he's thought about this one. "It's a compelling world," he admits, "and there will be opportunities in *Myst II* to go on if we feel those characters have a need to continue. But we have a lot of dreams, a lot of stories that we'd like to tell, so I think that after this one, we're going to at least give those characters some rest." □

The founding editor of *Fangoria*, Robert Martin is the author of the novel *Brain Damage*, based on the screenplay by Frank Henenlotter, and co-screenwriter of the movies *Frankenhooker* and *Basket Case 3*.

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## DRACULA

Continued from page 61

the last word in tragic, romantic vampires, appearing as a Byronic hippie: twentieth, fashionably dressed, with shoulder-length curls and smoked granny-glasses. He weeps for his lost love, killed in 15th-century Romania, now reincarnated in Mina (Winona Ryder).

Not knowing that the strange Count is a vampire, Mina falls genuinely and passionately in love with him, then nobly breaks off the affair because she has promised to marry Harker.

After she learns he is a vampire, she still loves him and forces herself upon him in a total perversion of that scene in Stoker's novel which turned Jonathan's hair white in sheer horror. Mina begs to be made immortal so she can be with Dracula forever. He tries to avoid her, warning her of the terrible fate of the vampire. She willingly drinks his blood, whereas the Dracula of the novel had to hold her, helpless, to the wound on his chest.

Gary Oldman gives an interesting, eccentric performance as the Count, but this tale of the Great Love That Never Died is not Stoker's *Dracula* at all. Bram Stoker, were he undead, would be spinning in his grave at this point, or, after sundown, rising up to wreak horrific vengeance. The film has its merits, but they are those of an original creation. It should be entitled *Francis Ford Coppola's Dracula*.

So what have Dracula's adapters done to him? What else? The same thing that the adapters of Frankenstein's monster have done: they've changed him beyond all recognition. Bela Lugosi, in his opening scene only, on the steps in the great hall of the castle (when he walks through the cobwebs without disturbing them), and Christopher Lee in perhaps 20 minutes of on-screen time in *Horror of Dracula*, have captured some of the character's essence. But none of the other impersonators have come remotely close. Nor are any likely to in the future, with the continual burden of the Jourdan, Langella, and now Oldman portrayals to contend with.

The "real" *Dracula*, created by Stoker, is one of the most unmitigated fiends in all literature. He is not the romantic figure the films have made him. The whole subtext of the novel is one of disease and contagion. Stoker's vampire evokes not merely horror but disgust. Like his charnal breath, he is *unclean*.

The modern moviegoer would never recognize Bram Stoker's original *Dracula*. He is not someone you'd want to invite into your parlor. □

A co-editor of *Weird Tales*, Darrell Schweitzer is author of the fantasy novels *The Shattered Goddess* and *The White Isle*, and the critical study *Pathways To Elfland: The Writings of Lord Dunsany*.

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## Future Shock

Continued from page 22

produced by Nicholas Meyer (who directed the exceptional *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*) and Steven Jaffe.

That's it from the good ship *Future Shock*. Keep your eyes peeled next issue for the latest Warner Brothers' *Batman III*, as well as a host of other information on the type of entertainment we all love best: sci-fi!:

Paul M. Sammon is the editor of *Splatterpunk 1 and 2*, as well as of the film book *Future Noir: The Making of 'Blade Runner'*.

### Twilight Zone Special

That Fifth dimension known to man as being "vast as space and timeless as infinity" is getting another television face-lift as CBS readies a two-hour special, *Twilight Zone: Rod Serling's Lost Classics*, for a May debut.

While the previous *Zone* revival in 1986 didn't survive, this latest offering is unique because it features some of Serling's last work.

The very last screenplay Serling had written, entitled "Where the Dead Are," was the anchor in getting this project off the ground and immediately interest surfaced, with O'Hara-Horowitz Productions making a commitment to bring it to the small screen.

"The Theater" wasn't for *Twilight Zone*, because it was written by Rod long after *Twilight Zone* went off the air," says Rod's widow, Carol Serling. "It worked for this format, though, because it is pure *Twilight Zone* and really could have played on the show at any time."

"Where the Dead Are" is a period piece set in Boston in 1869 and focuses on a brilliant surgeon, Dr. Ramsey (Patrick Bergin), who becomes intrigued by the past work of old Jeremy Wheaton (Jack Palance), a recluse living out his years on remote Shadow Island. What piques Ramsey's interest, is Wheaton's work with the re-generation of dead tissues—which could explain the Shadow Island's townfolks peculiar nature.

Finding a suitable host for the special was another crucial decision. Ultimately James Earl Jones (who coincidentally starred in the 1972 film *The Man*, which Serling had scripted) was chosen.

"This is definitely different from your normal fare on TV," says producer Michael Horowitz. "It's intelligent, and, I think, exquisitely produced. I hope its uniqueness is that it's Serling's last *Twilight Zone* script, and people are going to say 'I don't need to have six car chases to have some fun.'"

-Don E. Peterson

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## Quiz

# Spielberg 101

By BILL MUNSTER

1. Name the three Spielberg films in which Richard Dreyfuss starred.
2. What song does Willie (Kate Capshaw) sing at the start of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*?
3. What Johnny Mathis song plays on the record player in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* while young Barry Guiler is being abducted by aliens?
4. What book is Mary reading to her daughter, Gertie, in *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*?
5. What was the title of Spielberg's first 35-mm film, which ran only 22 minutes?
6. What animation genius was consulted in the early design stages of *1941*?
7. In *Jaws*, how much money does Captain Quint (Robert Shaw) want for capturing the shark?
8. What's the name of Quint's boat?
9. What was the working title of *E.T.*?
10. In which two Spielberg films does a glass of water signal danger?



Melting Nazis from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

11. *Always* is a remake of what 1943 Victor Fleming film?
12. Who wrote the novel on which *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* was officially based?
13. What kind of car does Dennis Weaver drive in *Duel*?
14. Name the six kinds of dinosaurs featured in *Jurassic Park*.



One of *Jurassic's* six *dino species*.

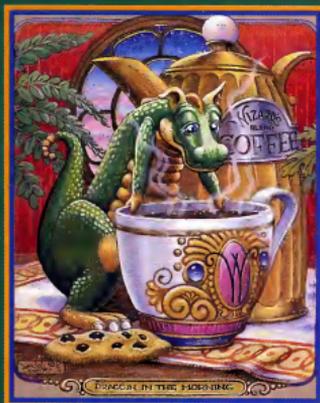
15. How many kinds of dinosaurs were featured in Michael Crichton's novel?
16. What was the nickname given to the mechanical shark during the filming of *Jaws*?
17. What Spielberg character specializes in ripping out human hearts with his bare hands?
18. What kind of candy is used to entice *E.T.*?
19. Which is the only Spielberg film not to list a costume designer in the credits?
20. Name Spielberg's first feature-length film.
21. In *Jaws*, to what do Quint and Matt Hooper raise a toast?
22. What unusual plant (though one familiar to SF fans) can be glimpsed aboard the spacecraft at the beginning of *E.T.*?
23. Where does the mothership land in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*?
24. What three well-known performers make cameo appearances in *Hook*?
25. In 1941, what movie is General V.J. Stillwell (Robert Stack) watching?

Bill Munster is the editor and publisher of Footsteps magazine and co-editor of the recent Dean Koontz Companion (Berkeley).

## ANSWERS:

1. *Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Always*.
2. "Anything Goes."
3. "Chances Are."
4. *Peter Pan*.
5. *Amblyopus brachiosaurus*.
6. *Chuk Jones*.
7. \$10,000.
8. *The Oryza*.
9. *A Boy's Life*.
10. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (in which a water glass sitting shadow reveals to Indiana that the German blimp in which he and his father are riding has begun to turn around) and *Jurassic Park* (in which the trembling of the water's surface signals the approach of a T. Rex).
11. *A Guy Named Joe*.
12. A guy named Steven Collins (as Inspector Good).
13. David Crosby (as "Tickles"), and Glenn Close (as "Cutless").
14. *Dumbo*.
15. *14*.
16. *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, *Velociraptor*, *Triceratops*, *Brachiosaurus*, *Diplodocus*, and *Gallimimus*.
17. *Mola*.
18. *Fifteen*.
19. *Jurassic Park*.
20. *Sugarland Express*.
21. Their legs.
22. *A Triffid*, the man-eating plant featured in 1963's *Day of the Triffids*.
23. *Devil's Tower* in Wyoming.
24. Phil Reese's *Pieces*.
25. *Jurassic Park*.

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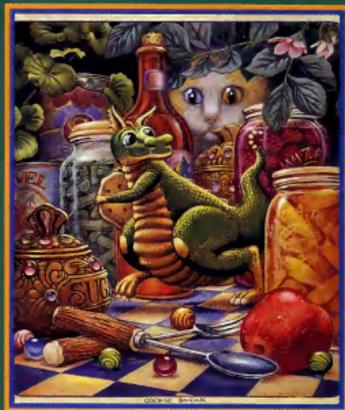
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# 800-TREKKER

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Attention Doctor Who fans! Another storyline from the Doctor Who vaults has been released! The 2-volume set *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* has been released on demand of the fans. The Tardis has landed in London. A menacing deserted London, with no sign of life and no sense of normality, but the decaying city is not as empty as it seems. The year is 2164 and the travellers soon find themselves facing antagonists whom they thought they had destroyed...The Daleks. They have conquered the Earth. This 1964 black & white release is now out on video for you to enjoy in your own home theater. Don't miss it!

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*Red Dwarf* comes as the crew of the *Red Dwarf* along to the rescue of three damsels and an asteroid in distress, then experience the new game sensation sweeping the solar system. This tape includes *Kryten*, *Better Than Life* and *Thanks For The Memory*.

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The original British comedy TV series *Red Dwarf* continues on video. Lister suffers hilarious hallucinations from a space virus. Personifications of his personality begin a battle under a rain of herring and exploding mazes in *Confidence* & *Paranoia*. This tape also includes *Waiting For God and Me*.

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The Crew is in for it again as the *Red Dwarf* travels back in time 3 million years and revisits the loves of Lister's life, then faces a revolt from the ship's backup computer, *Queeg 500*. This tape includes *Stasis Leak*, *Queeg* and *Parallel Universe*.

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# Here's to a circus with so many rings that we don't know where to look first.

BY TED KLEIN

**R**EMBER THOSE DAYS BEFORE CABLE, before satellite dishes, UHF, and public-access, when television was, in the words of one critic, "reality reduced to seven channels"? ■ Only seven channels. Think of that. ■ Remember even farther back, when the fourth network was something called DuMont? Remember when "late-night TV" was just a night owl's dream, and when you turned on the set at three a.m., all you got were test patterns? Scary!

Yet even in this age of electronic superhighways, when the much-heralded "500 channels" will soon be every American's birthright and the notion of "infinite channels" (see page 12) no longer seems so far-fetched,

Bill McKibben certainly would. In the *Age of Missing Information*, he recounts how he spent more than a thousand hours watching cable TV (some 93 stations in all), then spent 24 hours squatting alone on an Adirondack mountaintop, contemplating nature. He concludes—surprise!—that nature is better for the soul.

Is McKibben right? Shall I thank my lucky stars I've got just two channels, instead of seven or, God forbid, seventy? Is the isolation good for me? Healthier, somehow? More philosophically enlightening?

Hardly. As Griffin Dunne explained in *An American Werewolf* in London when asked what it was like to converse with the dead: "It's boring."

So here's to diversity. Here's to media overload. Here's to a circus with so many rings that we don't know where to look first.

WHICH BRINGS US TO THE SCI-FI CHANNEL. Because while you're waiting to be hooked up to that great digital pipeline, while you're limbering up to go channel-surfing down those promised 500 channels, you can prepare yourself for the 21st Century—and enjoy a circus with more rings than you can count—by plugging into the Sci-Fi Channel, a teeming electronic universe encompassing everything from cyberpunk to silents, 24 hours a day. It's a place where Dracula meets Alien, Carl Sagan the Cosmologist shares a spotlight with Conan the Barbarian, and Alfred Hitchcock rubs shoulders with the Incredible Hulk.

Have patience, future fans; if the Channel isn't offered yet in your locale, it will be soon.

We hope that the magazine will be just as lively and just as diverse as the fare on your TV. Our mandate, of course, is to keep you apprised of the Sci-Fi Channel's monthly lineup, but as our title indicates, we'll also be covering what's coming up in Hollywood, where sci-fi and related genres continue to account for some of the industry's biggest moneymakers. We'll talk to stars, directors, and makeup technicians; and for those curious souls among us who insisted on dismantling their rattles, Magic 8-Balls, and Etch-a-Sketches to find out how the damned things worked, we'll also focus on the special-effects geniuses who make spaceships fly, vampires melt, men change into wolves, and fool-high model dinosaurs wreck major cities.

Surely that's a lot more fun than staring at a blank screen. □



Viewers can get a glimpse of the future, 1926 style, in *Metropolis*, one of the classic films shown on the Sci-Fi Channel.

it's still possible to recreate those days of Jurassic TV—that primitive era when, in the wee small hours of the morning, there was literally Nothing On—simply by journeying far enough from the beaten track.

I have a cottage in the Catskills, for example, nestled amid deep woods and broadcast-blocking mountains, where cable is unavailable and even the best TVs pull in only two channels, one of them a local UHF station that shows nothing but infomercials for food processors and home body-building equipment, the other a weird CBS affiliate out of Schenectady that specializes in reruns. And when these channels go off the air—which they invariably do when the night is at its darkest—you're left staring at a blank screen.

Now, there are some who'd argue that the screen is better blank, and that the first step on the path to wisdom is to pull the plug, hide the TV, and silence that chattering voice.

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